

# Shafter Court

Summer 2004

The Magazine for Alumni and Friends of Virginia Commonwealth University

## CONNECTIONS



Why is VCU's graduate sculpture program number one in the country?



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# THE CAMPAIGN FOR VCU

## Campaign Goals

**School of Business: \$30 million**  
New School of Business building, Professorships and Scholarships

**School of the Arts: \$10.5 million**  
Scholarships, Visiting Artists, research, equipment and technology, and planning funds for a new Anderson Gallery

**School of Engineering: \$60 million**  
New Phase II expansion, Professorships and Scholarships

**Honors Program: \$1.5 million**  
Scholarships and a new Honors Center in the Honors Dorm

**Advantage Virginia Tennis Center: \$7.7 million**  
New youth tennis academy; a world-class tennis facility to attract major tennis tournaments to Virginia

**College of Humanities and Sciences and School of Mass Communications: \$5 million**  
Scholarships, Fellowships, Professorships and Chairs

**Schools of Social Work and Education: \$2 million**  
Scholarships, and funding for the Partnership for People with Disabilities

**Inger and Walter Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences: \$3 million**  
Research, facilities, and educational programming

**University Libraries: \$1 million**  
Building renovation and collection enhancement

**School of Allied Health Professions: \$4 million**  
Professorships, Scholarships, and Fellowships

**School of Dentistry: \$6 million**  
Virtual Dentistry Learning Center, Clinical Simulation Laboratory, and conference center

**School of Medicine: \$87 million**  
Research, Professorships, Chairs, Scholarships, and graduate stipends

**School of Nursing: \$13 million**  
New School of Nursing building, Scholarships, Chairs, Professorships, and capital projects.

**School of Pharmacy: \$15 million**  
Scholarships, Professorships, renovations and fund enhancement

**Massey Cancer Center: \$70 million**  
New Cancer Research Building, Professorships, research, and clinics

**MCV Hospitals and Clinics: \$4 million**  
New clinical critical care areas such as the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Clinic, and the Newborn Intensive Care Unit



Campaign leaders Tom Snead '76BS/B and Jim Roberts flank President Trani, facing VCU's future with gusto.

ALLEN JONES '82MFA '82MFA VCU CREATIVE SERVICES

On Wednesday, April 28, 2004 Virginia Commonwealth University celebrated the public launch of its Campaign for VCU, the most ambitious and extensive capital campaign in the University's history, at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond.

The Campaign's goal of \$330,500,000 will be raised through twenty focused mini-campaigns by June 30, 2007. Chaired by Tom '76BS/B and Vickie '76BS/B Snead for the Academic Campus and Charlotte and Jim Roberts for the VCU Health System, the Campaign for VCU had already raised \$187 million by May, exceeding the \$167 million raised for VCU's Partners for Progress campaign, which ended in 1999.

"This ambitious campaign," said VCU President Eugene Trani, "will help us fight the war on cancer, relieve the national nursing shortage, and improve patient treatment and care. The planned Monroe Campus [see back cover] will provide businesses with skilled and motivated executives and proficient engineers. The Campaign for VCU will establish Central Virginia as a national leader in Life Science. It will grant greater access to the fulfillment of the American dream through scholarships; attract bright and ambitious students and faculty to our community; and enrich cultural life not only in Virginia but nationally and internationally."

The Campaign for VCU builds on the tremendous success of Partners for Progress. With those funds, VCU added to endowed funds for Professorships, Chairs, Lectureships and Scholarships. VCU established a new School of Engineering, creating a \$31 million, state-of-the-art facility. VCU made numerous capital improvements on both campuses, including the MCV Alumni House and Paul Gross Conference Center, the Stuart C. Siegel Center, Biotech Two of the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park, the Richard T. Robertson Alumni House, and the Fine Arts Building. VCU added more degree and certificate options for our students and community; and the Campaign created a higher profile for VCU throughout Richmond, Virginia, and the country.

"Tom and I were so impressed with the accomplishments of the Partners for Progress Campaign that we were truly honored and excited to be asked to co-chair this campaign," said Vickie Snead. "As proud VCU alumni, we are more than happy to give back to an institution which has given us so much opportunity and which provides Richmond and the Commonwealth with so many economic, social, health and artistic opportunities."

"Due to severe state funding cutbacks, it is more important than ever to build the University's endowments and levels of private support," remarked Jim Roberts, president of the Theresa A. Thomas Memorial Foundation and campaign co-chair for the VCU Health System. "VCU graduates are some of the most dedicated and committed alumni I have ever seen. Their generosity and support will have a huge impact on the success of this campaign."

"The Campaign for VCU is not just about numbers," Trani emphasized. "It is about giving to preserve an ideal, to honor and remember someone's life and achievements, to make a statement for future generations, to give a helping hand, to relieve suffering through quality care and leading edge research, and to improve our quality of life through cultural enrichment."

For updates and more information about the Campaign for VCU, visit [www.vcu.edu/campaign](http://www.vcu.edu/campaign).



SUMMER 2004

Volume 9, Number 2

# Shafter Court CONNECTIONS



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*Shafter Court Connections* is a magazine for alumni and friends of the Academic Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. VCU is a Carnegie One Research University with an enrollment of 26,700 students on the Academic and Medical College of Virginia Campuses. The magazine is published twice a year by VCU Alumni Activities.

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Cover: Details of work by sculptors Morgan Kennedy '00MFA, George Ferrandi '93BFA, Alessandra Torres '04MFA, Claire Watkins '04MFA, Shannon Wright '90BFA and first-year graduate student Gabriel Bennett. Background photo by Kevin Schindler '89BFA.

**Stay Connected.** At [www.VCU-MCValumni.org](http://www.VCU-MCValumni.org), VCUEA members can get low-cost internet service through [vcu.org](http://vcu.org).





You gave a lot of space in the Fall 2003 issue of *Shafer Court Connections* to those who oppose our nation's deposing an evil regime in Iraq. Are you attempting to promote their agenda? Oftimes those who see so much evil in our institutions and so much virtue in themselves are the most corrupt among us.

For these people to call themselves patriotic and supporters of our troops is ludicrous. Their demonstrations and criticism of our government will only encourage those who take great delight in killing Americans. The Russian mass murderer Lenin had a term of endearment for those in free countries who would demonstrate against their government's use of the military and weapons of destruction while he plotted the violent overthrow of these same governments. Useful idiots.

Sincerely,  
Marshall S. Vaughan '66BS '69MS/B

I just wanted to thank you for the well written article, in *Shafer Court Connections*, on BranCore Technologies. I had an opportunity to read through the entire publication and I am sure you are very pleased as well. I have received compliments from a great deal of people, who have read the article, on how well it was written. Thanks again on a job well done.

Glenn Davis '86BS/B  
President, BranCore Technologies

The article about the Writing Center in Hibbs in the fall issue of *Shafer Court Connections* reminded me of the classes I really loved teaching at VCU in the 1970s and '80s. My favorite class, a 101 composition, happened to be located in a classroom across from the Writing Center. Yes, I enjoyed many aspects of that job!

The article about Elizabeth King, the sculptor, is also fascinating. How interesting it must be to be editing the magazine. Everything that goes on at the school becomes your subject.

I receive at least two alumni magazines, but yours seems... well, just a little bit warmer than the others. The touches of humor throughout the magazine are neat.

Martha Ragland  
Portland, OR

The article about my work in the fall issue of *Shafer Court Connections* is wonderful! My principal is particularly pleased at the accuracy of information. I've sent copies to Toyota TIME and Dominion Resources, and I know they will be thrilled to see it. I have also forwarded copies to the Title I supervisor and the Henrico County director of Elementary Education. My parents have a copy, too. My own children were very excited to see Mommy in a magazine!

I am thrilled and honored to be included in the article. Thank you so much for taking the time to recognize me. Your magazine is excellent!

Lisa Hall '93MED  
Title I Math Teacher  
Adams Elementary School  
Henrico County, Virginia



*Monday Morning*, oil on canvas by Diane Fryleman

### Birthday Exhibit

Ten years ago, the School of the Arts and the Office of Community Programs created an off-campus graduate art program, offering classes to art teachers and other artists in public school art studios from Northern Virginia to Virginia Beach. Now, more than 200 students take classes each semester in painting and drawing, crafts, computer arts and art education; and VCU offers a Master of Art Education and Master of Interdisciplinary Studies in the Fine Arts.

Get a look at the best of alumni work in the "VCU/MIS Tenth Anniversary Exhibition" at the Verizon Gallery of the Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, July 12-August 6. Jurors are *Washington Post* art critic Michael O'Sullivan and art writer and curator Sara Tanguy.

### Art in Miniature

Phil Meggs '64BFA '71MFA, VCU faculty member and chair of communication arts and design who died of leukemia November 24, 2002, was posthumously awarded the U.S. Postal Service's Medal of Freedom. From 1993 until his death, Meggs served on the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, which recommends designs for stamps. Postmaster General John Potter commented, "Many of the stamps that travel on the nation's mail... will be lasting reminders of Phil's talent and special gift for graphic design."



### Commencement Breakfast

Alumni fed the newest alumni and their families before graduation on May 22, when VCU awarded more than 2,700 professional, graduate and undergraduate degrees. VCU conferred more than 1,800 degrees at Fall Commencement in December 2003.

Virginia's Governor Mark Warner told graduates at commencement that VCU's tradition of excellence won't continue unless they embrace the value of education. "You can't have education on the cheap in Virginia," Warner said. "VCU and Virginia need you to support public universities. Don't sit on the sidelines on this or any other issues that shape America's future." Warner received an honorary doctor of humane letters from VCU.

### E-xpress!

Our first issue of an alumni e-letter went out this spring. Update or sign up your email address to receive current university news and schedules, and link to photos of alumni events. What would you like to be updated on? Let us know. [www.vcu-mcvalumni.org](http://www.vcu-mcvalumni.org)



### VCU at Dominion Resources

Mary Doswell, President of Dominion Resources Services, Inc. and wife of Board of Visitors member John Doswell '79DDS, hosted a reception with President Trani for 100 VCU alumni employees and guests at Dominion Resources on May 24. VCU Men's Basketball coach, Jeff Capel, shared his pride in VCU players' NCAA trip and their academic success this semester.







## L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

On May 21, VCU's Board of Visitors named VCU's new School of Government and Public Affairs after L. Douglas Wilder, VCU Distinguished Professor and former Virginia Governor. Wilder was the first and is still the only African-American elected governor in U.S. history, in 1990. During his term, Virginia was recognized as the best managed state in the country two years in a row.

Dr. Robert Holsworth, director of the School in the College of Humanities and Sciences, notes, "Governor Wilder's commitment to the highest standards of governmental practice, political inclusion and independent thought are core values of the School." Wilder has taught at VCU for 10 years.

## Keeping Women Healthy

Janett Forte '87BS/H&S '92MSW is the new coordinator of the National Center of Excellence (CoE) in Women's Health at VCU—one of 19 national models for providing comprehensive, integrated health care for women. Forte and her colleagues collaborate with more than sixty multi-disciplinary health systems, universities and community groups.

The CoE Women's Health Care Center at the Park at Stony Point is a pilot site for the national Health Information Rx project, a partnership with VCU's Tomkins-McCaw Library and the National Library of Medicine. Through the project physicians can give their patients comprehensive, reliable and easy-to-use health information from MEDLINEplus.gov.

Other recent CoE projects have established women's health screenings and referrals at a local church; improved services for women veterans at risk for homelessness; and offered low-cost or free prenatal care for Hispanic women in local clinics. The CoE has also submitted several grants for programs to prevent violence in families.



## "War and the White House"

Tom Curley, president and CEO of The Associated Press, presented the first Bill Turpin Lecture in News Management on February 26. Curley, former president and publisher of *USA Today*, discussed recent events in Iraq and the relationship between the media and the White House in wartime.

Although "many news division budgets have been cut and people have less help overseas," Curley was optimistic. "I think 'free expression' has never been freer, and with the internet the barriers towards entry are plummeting."

In his sixteen years at VCU, the late Dr. William Turpin was guru, coach and advisor to hundreds of aspiring journalists. His students and colleagues established the lecture.



VCU CREATIVE SERVICES

## Open Doors, Enter Community

VCU's Student Commons is the center of student life outside of the classroom and a key to President Trani's goal of making VCU "a truly student-centered university." The Commons Phase 3 expansion opened with a weekend of festivities April 15-17, including a gala ball and silent auction.

The open concourse of the new Commons entrance encloses the old outdoor walkway, offering generous space for the flow of walking traffic and a larger central Information Center. The 39,000 square-foot addition includes a renovated Park Place Food Court and Commons Café, a revamped Commons Theater, and an outdoor stage in the Commons Plaza. On the second floor, high glass windows overlook the Plaza; the Richmond Salons is a 4,000 square foot multi-use ballroom with a catering kitchen. The James River Terrace is a sound-proof study lounge and reception area overlooking the main lobby.

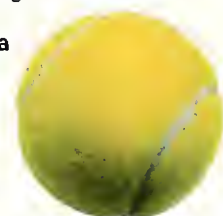
Commons director, Dr. Timothy Reed, points out that everyone on campus—students, faculty and staff—uses the Commons. "Our Student Commons is also the community center for the campus; and all the community is welcome." VCU Alumni Association President Dr. JoLynne DeMary '72Med represented the alumni community in the dedication and key ceremony April 15.

## Raise A Racquet!

Tennis greats **Martina Navratilova** and **Monica Seles** entertained 2,700 spectators at an exhibition match at the Siegel Center, March 22. The event was part of the "Raise a Racquet!" series coordinated by the VCU SportsCenter to promote tennis in Richmond, while raising money for VCU, Advantage Virginia and The McCormack Foundation. On March 21, graduate students in sports management coordinated a silent auction and gala dinner where guests mingled with Seles and Navratilova and bid on over 150 auction items, from laser eye surgery to golf clubs.

The McCormack Foundation supports educational, sports and service charities. Advantage Virginia fosters world-class tennis in Virginia and brings tennis and tutoring to Richmond youth through "Lobs & Lessons."

On September 17, six-time Grand Slam title winner **Serena Williams** will play comeback phenomenon **Jennifer Capriati** at the Siegel Center at the Anthem LIVE! fundraiser for the Massey Cancer Center. Tickets at Ticketmaster; box seats through the Massey Cancer Center development office, (804) 828-0034.



## Whiting Writer

Novelist **Kwadwo Agymah Kamau, MFA'92** received one of ten \$35,000 Whiting Writers' Awards for 2003. These awards support emerging talent in fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and play writing. Kamau is also VCU's 2004 Distinguished Alumnus from the College of Humanities and Sciences. His two award-winning novels are *Flickering Shadows* and *Pictures of a Dying Man*.

## Design Original

Buie Harwood, VCU professor of interior design, is the first to receive the Educator of Distinction Award from the American Society of Interior Designers. She was honored for her work on career path standards affecting the excellence of future designers. Harwood was department chair 1997-03 and helped develop the VCU-Qatar School of Design Arts.

## Destination ImagiNation

The VCU Alumni Association hosted 3,000 elementary, middle and high school students swarming across campus on April 24. The kids tested their skills and creativity at the state finals of Destination ImagiNation. Teamwork is the key, says DI Affiliate Director **Susan Nunemaker '65BS/H&S '87Med**. "It's rare to have a successful team with one kid doing all the work."





## Fire Safety

On Friday, March 26, student apartments under construction by RAMZ at the southeast corner of Shafer and Broad Streets caught fire – apparently started by cigarette butts discarded in a packed trash chute. In minutes there was a roaring, billowing conflagration.

Nearby buildings, including the Fine Arts Building, student apartments at 1100 West Broad, the VCU Bookstore and the West Broad Parking Deck, were quickly evacuated. Art students stumbled out into the black smoke on Broad Street, astonished—but carrying video and still cameras. Most workers were on lunch break; those in the structure left quickly by cement staircases.

As the construction site blazed, wind gusts to 30 mph blew chunks of burning insulation across Broad Street, first to the roof of the Fine Arts Building and the buildings east of it, and north to houses and businesses in the Carver neighborhood. Debris from the fire even blew across interstate 95 and started a small fire at a warehouse.

It took three hours for Fire Departments of Richmond, Henrico, Chesterfield, Hanover and Charles City to bring the fire under control. One person, a neighbor on an oxygen system, died when power was turned off as a precaution. In the city's worst fire in 30 years, 29 build-

ings, including homes and businesses, and 22 cars were destroyed or damaged.

VCU's Incident Response Team, directed by Senior Vice President Paul Timmreck, went into high gear. With cots from the Red Cross, the Siegel Center was ready to house students who could not return to apartments. By evening, VCU students living in 1100 West Broad Apartments were able to return to their dorm rooms. For Carver neighbors, VCU Facilities Management crews made temporary repairs and helped move belongings to safe storage.

Although the blaze made a hole 30'x 40' in the roof of the Fine Arts Building, and the heat blew out windows, there was miraculously little smoke and water damage. Crews cleared broken glass, and classrooms and studios were open on Monday. Timmreck estimates repairs at \$1 million, to be covered by the builder's insurer. He adds, "We dodged a huge silver bullet on this."

RAMZ and VCU explained that the fire was so severe because of the stage of the building, before sheetrock walls were up and before sprinklers were in. In April, when Richmond inspectors rechecked building plans, they found that the structure was not built to city code for a five-story building. Exterior walls should have been concrete, masonry or built with steel-framing, not lumber.

City inspectors plan to tighten their process. Timmreck is confident that the dorm will be safe, and VCU has offered RAMZ a full-time inspector during rebuilding. In the meantime, VCU will find other housing for 172 students who planned to live in the apartments this fall.

As for similar dorms built recently, Timmreck says, "We're very satisfied. ...We believe they're done to code. They're safe."

To help Carver neighbors, write checks to the VCU Foundation; notation Carver Relief Fund. Mail to VCU Foundation; Carver Community Relief Fund; P.O. Box 843042; Richmond, VA 23284-3042. Or call (804) 828-8850. By May, \$86,689.20 had been collected.

Alumni perspective—photo from the roof of the Alumni House.

### Roll Call

**Dr. Edward Bersoff**, a Northern Virginia entrepreneur and business consultant, was elected rector of the VCU Board of Visitors in May. He is founder and chair of Greenwich Associates, a consulting firm in McLean, VA.

**Dr. John Borgard**, associate dean of undergraduate academic affairs in the College of Humanities and Sciences, is retiring July 1. He came to VCU in August, 1971 as an assistant dean in the then School of Arts and Sciences. In 33 years he oversaw two major curriculum changes in General Education; co-chaired revamping of the student information system; and helped develop the English Language Program at VCU and the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (formerly BGS). An advocate for quality advising, Borgard "treasures the time that I was able to spend with students to give them the direction they needed to take the next step."

**Dr. Timothy Hulsey** plans to create a new vision for the VCU Honors Program, where he became the new director in January. He had been director of the University Honors program at Texas State University since 2001.

**James Potyraj** brings more than 20 years of experience in physician group practice administration to his new role as Executive Director of MCV Physicians (MCVP), the faculty practice plan of the VCU Health System. He is also associate dean of the VCU School of Medicine.

After 21 years on VCU's mass communications faculty, **Dr. David Kennamar** is retiring to Portland, Oregon. Kennamar has taught graduate and undergraduate classes, as well as assisting with the PhD program in public policy and administration. In 1994, he was a Fulbright Teaching Fellow in Argentina. He was senior research associate in VCU's Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory for a decade, and served as associate director and graduate studies coordinator for the School of Mass Communications, as well as director of International and Area Studies for the College of Humanities and Sciences.

### Crossing Boundaries

"Is the world a safer place without Saddam Hussein?" Hans Blix asked 1,000 people at the Siegel Center April 22. "It doesn't look that way." The former chief U.N. weapons inspector and chair of the International Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction discussed his new book, *Disarming Iraq*, and spoke of possibilities for facilitating world peace.

The current U.S. administration, Blix said, exaggerated the case for war after U.N. inspectors found no clear evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The government, he said, was "putting exclamation points where they should have put question marks." One lesson of the war, Blix commented, is that international inspection teams came closer to the reality in Iraq than national intelligence agencies did.

His lecture was part of VCU's Crossing Boundaries—a yearlong series on global issues



sponsored by the School of World Studies and the Honors Program, funded by National Endowment for the Humanities. [www.has.vcu.edu/wld](http://www.has.vcu.edu/wld)

### Provost to President

VCU's Provost, Dr. Roderick McDavis, will leave VCU to take over the presidency of Ohio University, his alma mater, on July

1. McDavis has been VCU's provost since 1999. During his tenure, VCU Life Sciences was established; 20 academic programs, including six doctoral programs, were approved; and student engagement on campus was dramatically enhanced.

OU Board Chair Robert Walter said McDavis "has the distinctive professional and personal skills and vision to continue [OU's] legacy of strong presidential leadership."





## Championship Season

VCU Athletics has seen tremendous success in the past two years, highlighted by the Men's Basketball team's Colonial Athletic Association championship and subsequent trip to the NCAA Tournament. Many Rams fans traveled to Raleigh, N.C. to see 13th-seeded VCU face fourth-seeded Wake Forest of the ACC. After struggling at the start, the Rams led 37-34 at halftime. VCU was ahead by six with less than eight minutes remaining before the Demon Deacons pulled out a 79-78 victory. Senior guard Domonic Jones, CAA Player of the Year and honorable mention All-American, paced the Rams with 22 points and seven assists.

Courted by other schools, head coach Jeff Capel chose VCU for six more years. "The bottom line is that I love where I am. And most importantly, I love my team. We're in the process here of

building something really special and I want to be a part of that."

VCU Alumni Association president **Bill Ginther '69BS '74MS/B** made the trip to Raleigh. He commented, "Maybe we lost, but it sure feels like we won!" VCU teams who go to the NCAA traditionally receive commemorative rings. The Alumni Association will buy the rings and present them to the players next fall.

**Men's Tennis**, under CAA Coach of the Year Paul Kostin, won its ninth consecutive conference title with a 4-2 win over Old Dominion on April 25. VCU earned an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Last fall, **Men's Soccer** won the CAA regular-season and tournament titles for the second year in a row. The Rams won a school-record 17 matches and climbed to #7 in the national polls. Seeded #9 in the NCAA Tournament, VCU lost in the third round to eventual national champion Indiana. Matthew Delicate was 2003 CAA Player of the Year and second team All-America.

**Men's Track and Field** finished second at CAA Championships in April. Freshman Davion Lambert won the long jump and qualified for NCAA Regionals in May. The freshman 4x100 team of James Frierson, Eric Coleman, Marcus Tyus and Juron Williams set a Sports Backers Stadium record and qualified for NCAA Regionals. In **Women's Track and Field**, sophomore Tanika Brown placed second at the CAA Championships in the high jump and qualified for NCAA Regionals. She was first at NCAA Regionals a year ago and advanced to the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field championships.

## VCU's Budget Increasing

On May 7, Virginia's legislators finally agreed on a compromise budget for 2004-06. It was certainly worth the wait for VCU, Virginia higher education, and citizens using those intellectual resources.

With new funding for base operating of \$7.2 million in 2004-05 and \$15.1 million in 2005-06, VCU can re-invest in program initiatives and high priority needs. VCU moves forward with Monroe Campus plans (see back cover), with \$15.3 million for the School of Business from state-financed bond proceeds; \$14 million in University-supported revenue bonds for Monroe Campus Parking Deck (800 cars); and the use of \$5 million from University financing for land acquisition. The capital budget also includes authorization of \$20.7 million for Academic Campus Housing for 400 students using University-supported revenue bonds and \$1.6 million to construct the headquarters for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries at the Rice Center. The capital budget includes authorization as well for VCU to fund \$8 million for a world class Tennis Complex and \$5 million for land acquisition.

The level of state support for VCU's budget will increase significantly in 2004-06—the result of years of effective communication with the Governor, his Cabinet and the General Assembly—and thanks to alumni urging their legislators to increase funding for VCU. More details at [www.vcu.edu/finance/pdf/presummgengasassembly04-06.pdf](http://www.vcu.edu/finance/pdf/presummgengasassembly04-06.pdf)

## World News Tonight!

Twelve television monitors in Cabell Library's International Newsroom connect users to more than 60 channels worldwide, including stations in Iran, Israel and other parts of the Middle East, as well as Taiwan, Korea, Romania, Georgia and Italy. The superlink targets international students; students in World Studies; students of international politics, languages and culture; Mass Communications students of comparative journalism; and many others with interest (and language skills!) in international affairs. Monitors in the Office of International Programs and the School of World Studies give students even more access.

<http://www.library.vcu.edu/jbc/newsroom/channels.html>

## Biomedical Elite

Dr. Jennifer Wayne, director of VCU's Orthopaedic Research Laboratory, has been elected to the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering's College of Fellows. Its members are the top 1.5 percent of U.S. biomedical engineers.

"I chose this career because I enjoy it, so it's rewarding to be recognized," said Wayne. Her current projects include using computer models to help repair damaged cartilage and determining the biomechanical consequences of tissue damage in joints.



## Weekend Home

Researchers have estimated that families account for 40 percent of the homeless population, the fastest growing segment.

Since 1998, with the help of VCU social work students like Bernell Turner (center), Dr. Timothy Davey has led weekend retreats to help strengthen homeless families and address some of the psychosocial problems that homeless parents and their children experience.

"The activities in the retreat setting can often help families temporarily forget some of the everyday issues they face and instead enjoy just being with their family members again," says Davey. The respite also gives families some practice in skills to help them function better. VCU students learn group skills through actual experience.

## Unreconstructed

VCU historian Dr. Ted Tunnell discussed Reconstruction, the tragic period following the Civil War, on the national PBS series *American Experience* in January. Tunnell argued against the stereotype of Northern "carpetbaggers" as unprincipled scoundrels who came to the South to profit at the expense of war-ravaged whites.

Tunnell's book, *Edge of the Sword*, is a biography of Marshall Harvey Twitchell, a Union veteran from Vermont who took a job in Louisiana in the newly created Freedmen's Bureau. "He doesn't know it," Tunnell told viewers, "but he is in what is probably the most violent place in America."

Twitchell settled in, married, bought a plantation and brought his family from the North, giving them jobs. While struggling to ensure the rights of blacks, Twitchell raised the ire of the region's formerly wealthy planters. A mob of angry whites slaughtered his brother and brothers-in-law, along with two others. This "Terrorism in the South," as one newspaper headline declared, horrified a nation inured to violence.



## The Devil Goes Down

*Down Beat* magazine gave a four-star rating to *Idle Hands*, the first CD from **Devil's Workshop**, an ensemble featuring many current and former VCU students. The February review described the band as "a nicely tongue-in-cheek 17-piece teaming with ideas, energy, and, I suspect from the rapturous reception at this live date in Virginia, jam band appeal." The CD features eight tunes by the group plus an original by pianist **Daniel Clarke '01BM/A**. Devil's Workshop performs weekly at Bogart's Back Room in Richmond.



## Every Breath You Take...

**Shirley Verrett**, one of the first African-American opera stars, presented a master class at VCU on February 28, part of a special series celebrating VCU's new African American Studies major. VCU President Eugene Trani awarded Verrett an honorary doctorate in humane letters at a reception after the class. Verrett co-wrote her autobiography *I Never Walked Alone*, with Dr. Christopher Brooks, VCU associate professor of African American studies and anthropology.

Verrett focused on the physical aspects of vocal tone production, pressing her hands against singers' stomachs and peering into their mouths to check technique. "I thought my heart was going to jump out of my chest," said junior soprano Tiara Walker. "But I couldn't take my eyes off her, and soon my love of singing took over and the tension went away."

"She's a lot braver than I am," commented President Trani.

## Les Chevaliers

At VCU's 12th annual French Film Festival in March, **Drs. Peter and Françoise Kirkpatrick**, festival founders and directors, were decorated as Chevaliers dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ambassador to the U.S., Jean-David Levitte. The festival has brought 130 French and francophone films to America, introduced by their directors, actors and writers.

Peter Kirkpatrick is executive director of VCU's Office of International Education; Françoise Ravaux-Kirkpatrick is professor of French at the University of

Richmond. American chevaliers include Toni Morrison and Robert Redford.

## Tasmeem Doha 2004

World-renowned designers gathered in Doha, Qatar, February 23-26 for Tasmeem Doha 2004, Qatar's first international design conference hosted by the VCU School of the Arts in Qatar with the Qatar Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing. The design conference—a rarity in this part of the world—explored the role of design in guiding and securing the cultural identity of a country, especially one changing as rapidly as Qatar.

"Design is an expression of values," said Mary McLaughlin, associate dean for academic affairs, VCU-Qatar. The conference goal, she said, was to show the 250 design professionals, students and faculty attendees "the benefits of being in charge of their own cultural values, as expressed in their design work."

Conference speakers included Iranian-born Gisue Hariri. In 1986 she and her sister Mojgan established Hariri & Hariri Architecture in New York City, dedicated to research and construction of innovative ideas. "Go back in history and examine what is essential for our buildings and use them in an innovative way," Hariri told conference participants. "Modern doesn't mean westernized. You should capture the essence of your culture and transform it into original works."

New York-based industrial designer Karim Rashid's clients include Prada, Issey Miyake and Shiseido. Don't follow styles, he told designers, because every style is locked into a specific period. "We are steeped so deeply in nostalgia and don't want to let go of the past, which is hindering our moving into the future."

Other speakers included evening and bridal wear designer Reem Acra; Lebanese designer of print and interactive graphics Tarek Atrissi; Canadian graphic designer David Berman; MoMA curator of Architecture and Design Paola Antonelli; and renowned fashion merchandiser Joseph Johnson.



Gisue Hariri



Karim Rashid



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## Dancing with Horses

A goal of VCU's Department of Dance and Choreography is to stretch the idea of "what dance can be, where dance can happen, and who can dance," says department chair Martha Curtis. For hitting the home stretch, you could hardly beat the April performance of *Dancing with Horses*, *Equus I*, at an equestrian center in Manakin-Sabot.

Called "an astonishing effort" by *Dance Magazine*, the *Dancing with Horses* company partners dancers with horses and riders to reveal the relationship between horse and human. "There is a generosity that we're asking from the dancers," says Artistic Director JoAnna Mendl Shaw. "You have to become the creature, ... to shed the ego thinking that only we as humans matter."

The company developed *Equus I* during its research residency at VCU. Fifteen VCU dance majors danced in *Equus I* with local riders, company dancers, Equestrian Collaborator Maddrey Baker—and the horses. Integrated with the dance were prerecorded and live video close-ups by Peter Richards. DWH also did a workshop with school children and a clinic for riders during the residency.

Student dancers performed at the Kennedy Center on June 1 when VCU was one of eight schools chosen for a National Celebration of University Dance.

## Connecting Autistic Children

VCU professor of pediatrics Dr. Mary Megson rejects the widely accepted hypothesis that autistic children perceive other people as objects and are unable to understand that others have their own thoughts and viewpoints. Megson believes that the children's apparently alienated behavior is a rational response to terrifying visual difficulties.

Megson presented evidence from her practice at a recent conference on nutritional psychiatry in London. Although several large-scale studies refute her theory, Megson believes that vaccination is at least one factor fueling a dramatic rise in autism.

Megson suspects that some children have a genetic susceptibility to vaccines that damage G proteins. The damage impairs the retinal cells that convey shading and depth. As a result, these children have only a tiny window of clear three-dimensional vision, surrounded by vague shapes and colors. They cannot follow movement, especially subtleties of facial expression, and desperately seek the comfort of familiar patterns.

Megson treats her patients with unsaturated "cis" vitamin A (found in salmon, cod, liver) to get G-protein pathways working again. "The results can be dramatic," says Megson. "Within a few days, these children regain eye contact. They may start looking at their mother and speaking. Watching it happen, you get a strong sense of something being unblocked."

## Wake Up, Romania!

*Mud Forest*, a play about Romania's revolution in 1989-90, directed at VCU this spring by Janet Rodgers with a cast of Romanian and VCU student actors, will play at the International Theatre Festival in Sibiu, Romania, in June, part of a long exchange between Theatre VCU and Sibiu actors.

Rodgers, head of voice and speech training in the Theatre Department, will stay in Sibiu as a Fulbright Scholar to work with student actors at Lucian Blaga University during fall, 2004.







KEVIN SCHINDLER '98FA

How do you get to be the  
number one sculpture program  
in the country? VCU makes

# Insider Artists

from out of town.

BY MEG MEDINA

For the past ten years, VCU's Sculpture Department has moved steadily from a small department in a mid-sized, conservative city to a nationally-recognized force. In April 2003, VCU's Sculpture Department was ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the best graduate sculpture program in the country, topping Yale and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. A visionary style of administration, a stellar faculty, and top facilities for making art have made VCU's department a winner.

The philosophy driving the program is about fully preparing students for the realities of a life in art. "You can't let the students walk out of here and feel like outsiders," insists Joe Seipel, senior associate dean of the School of the Arts. "We need to provide as much as possible a seamless transition to the professional world."

Seipel was a member of the sculpture faculty for 28 years and chair for 17, until he left the department three years ago to become senior associate dean and director of Graduate Studies for VCU's art school. In 2001 he received the Sculpture Educator Lifetime Achievement Award from The International Sculpture Center—thanks, he said, to "terrific faculty and alumni artists showing work all over the world." He is also a working and exhibiting sculptor and president of the National Council of Arts Administrators (museum curators and directors, art school deans and chairs).



KEVIN SCHINDLER '98FA



KEVIN SCHINDLER '98FA



CLAIRE WATKINS '04MFA



His colleagues and alumni credit him with much of the energy and impetus that put VCU Sculpture on the pedestal. "It's comforting to know he's in the Dean's Office," says Acting Chair Lester Van Winkle, "because he's an incredibly talented administrator." Alumna George Ferrandi '93 BFA seconds that. "Joe is revolutionary in administration. He supports the faculty and the students and prioritizes the art."

Characteristically, Seipel emphasizes the group effort. "About ten years ago, we, as a faculty, decided to take the program national," he begins.

## Get Outta Town!

The department mantra became *Get out of town*. "Faculty and students really have to look at what's happening around the country and internationally," Seipel explains. "Richmond is located so that people in this department get out of town all the time to places like DC and New York. We promote that. The work—professional work—is of the utmost concern, especially for faculty because they are role models for the students."

The full time faculty of six includes Seipel; and VCU is currently hiring another. They are all working and exhibiting artists with hefty accomplishments we can only sample here. Acting department chair Lester Van Winkle has an extraordinary body of work shown internationally and found in public collections like the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the National Collection of American Arts as well as in 70 private collections. He was VCU's Distinguished Teacher for 2003. Elizabeth King is a 2003 Guggenheim Fellow with work in collections of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington and a book,

*Attention's Loop*. Carlton Newton is assistant chair of sculpture and directs digital media for the department. Newton received the American Academy in Rome Prize in sculpture and has exhibited at The New Museum in New York and The Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans.

Chuck Henry's work was part of the 2002 International Digital Art Awards show which traveled across Australia, then to the International Digital Biennale in St. Petersburg, Russia and to galleries across Europe. Kendall Buster joined the faculty in 2002. Recently, she finished a large scale sculpture commissioned by the DC Convention Center in Washington and participated in *Open Circuit*, an international show at the NSA in Durban, South Africa.

VCU faculty also became a notable presence at conferences. "Our travel budget went from \$300 a year to \$10,000," says Seipel. "When we organized a panel, we asked the chairs of the top five sculpture programs, or the top art school deans to participate. That made our presentations more sophisticated and substantial, and gave our faculty connections with top schools and administrators." Excellence generated even more interest, so "our reputation snowballed."

## New York Comes to Richmond

An ingenious pragmatism is typical of the Sculpture Department's operations and co-operations, within in the art school and with other arts groups like the Virginia Museum and the *Virginia Review*. Seipel and Richard Roth, chair of VCU's Department of Painting and Printmaking (tied for number 10 with Cranbrook Academy of Art in the *U.S. News* list), pooled resources to bring New York and Los Angeles, Europe, Asia and South America to Richmond. Artists like Ann Hamilton, James Hyde, Sheila Pepe, James Siena; gallery owners; even poet-critics like John Ashberry and the *New Yorker's* Peter Schjeldahl have come to campus to work with VCU students.

"We did it by accommodating busy, working artists who could come for only compacted periods," explains Seipel.

*Detail of Possess/Pose Us detail by Alessandra Torres, at work above.*





"We just said, 'Okay, what fits your schedule?'" Instead of full semester on-campus residency, an artist might come two or three times for four six-hour days.

"The first year I think we had 38 visiting artists. It was really a lot of work, I have to admit. The graduate students were begging for mercy. But it was wonderful work. The students need to see that these are *people*, not icons."

## Artists' Structures

Still, artists get the most from out of town experience only with a solid grounding, a home base, physically and theoretically where they can develop their own artistic identity. VCU's Sculpture Department faculty and facilities keep young artists working productively on campus to discover and express and refine their art.

Stroll through VCU's Fine Arts Building, opened in 1999, and it's easy to feel the energy of the place. Part glassy office building and part clanging factory, the building pulses with the whirl of sewing machines and the buzz of power saws. Students mill from space to space, talking, lugging work to critique rooms, or reading magazines about contemporary artists in other cities. Others are lost in thought inside their studios, a funky shantytown of cement spaces divided by plywood and gates. Porcelain torsos, enormous pink foam feet, dresses made of cellophane stand, lean and lie about—found treasure destined to become someone's personal statement about the world we occupy.

First-rate facilities include tools like the induction foundry for melting large crucibles of metal or the 3-dimensional laser scanner to name just two—a relief from strained quarters during the '90s. As VCU's School of the Arts grew to one of the largest in the country, departments and studios had overflowed the Theresa Pollak Building into basements and odd spaces throughout the Academic Campus.

Ferrandi laughs remembering the "crazy old building" at Shafer and Broad Streets. For several years before its demise, the patchwork building was adorned by a weird chute structure in the yard, with a kind of papier mache chicken perched on top. A warren of corridors was rife with odd twists and "all these enigmatic back stairwells," says Ferrandi. On the other hand, "it was a great place to make art," she says. "You couldn't possibly mess it up. You could almost cut out walls for a performance if you wanted to."

While no one contemplates slicing through drywall in the Fine Arts Building these days, the faculty agrees that the new facility has had a tremendous impact, and not only because of terrific tools.

"This building really changed the whole nature of our work," says Van Winkle; "there's an amazing cross-fertilization." Elizabeth King continues, "It's richer to have momentum all going on in the same building. Ideas

beget ideas. It's a kind of spawning and artistic development when you see what is going on with your peers."

Even the department office is placed to encourage interaction. It's near the studios in an open, garage-like area where students can gather, sprawl, talk, argue and groan companionably. It's presided over by Department Coordinator Connie Brown, a.k.a. "mom," whose impeccable memory for sculpture alumni and their accomplishments goes back to 1976.

Crossing disciplines is the key to a recombinant art world where borders between arts are constantly shifting or dissolving and media mergers abound. The curriculum is also structured to encourage cross pollination of art forms. "We've always called our courses simply Beginning Sculpture or Advanced Sculpture," says King. "Unlike other schools, we don't differentiate between the different kinds of practice. Instead, a given class of students is critiquing everything from bronze, to computer pieces, installations and performance. We've chosen to have students talk to each other across those lines."

Students move even more freely among the media they imagine because of another practical innovation. The six-week technical modules cover specific skills, from welding, to video editing, to flexible mold making and machining. "The idea was that you could plug in as you need them," Seipel explains. "Several universities use this model now. But you could say it wasn't necessarily embraced by the former administration when we first proposed it."

The modules gave installation artist **Alessandra Torres '04MFA** a huge advantage for her room-sized works with multiple components. Whether she's creating porcelain forms or welding wheels to a mannequin, her transformation of space relies on everything from sewing skills to ceramics and glass blowing. And she's a stickler for quality. "I want a welder to be able to look at my work and say, 'She really knows what she's doing.' You really learn to do things correctly here," she says.



*Claire Watkins '04MFA makes delicate neurosensory-like webs of intricate connection.*

KEVIN SCHINDLER '99BFA

B-1 FOUNDED ART BY CLAIRE WATKINS '04MFA PHOTO BY KEVIN SCHINDLER '99BFA



## The Work of Art

For **Shannon Wright '90BFA**, now working and teaching in San Jose, California, the technical modules are an element of a delicate balance at VCU that often eludes other art schools.

"VCU Sculpture is really invested in teaching critical theory *and* fabrication. You can go to a pure 'theory' school. Or there are other schools that focus on making, on technique. VCU combines both and takes them seriously."

That work ethic is ingrained. VCU sculpture students work hard—very hard. The faculty requires students to produce a great deal of work, to glean knowledge from every source to do so, and to engage in the very highest Socratic dialogue about what they've done.

"We would like our students to be the authors of their education," says King. "They must be responsible for what they know, and it includes their engagement with the rest of the University, as well. We like them to be responsible for finding knowledge, for choosing the electives that can be meaningful to the art they make. If you have a student who's involved with images from the natural world, let's say, they can draw from microbiology. They *should* take a biology class."



Visiting Artist **Bonnie Collura '94BFA**, who also holds an MFA from Yale, acknowledges that the work load at VCU is intense. But the expectation of completing work, coupled with an intense critique process, make for a disciplined artist. "I'm glad I got the education I received in the order I received it. If I hadn't gone to VCU first, I don't think I would have developed a true, down-to-earth work ethic."

"It was a work ethic I didn't see anywhere else," agrees Wright. "Having the graduate students around really helped that. We watched them just *live* in their studios. You learned to work as hard as you could until you realized your idea."

"It's an environment where it's just really cool to be a hard working art student. Dilettantes are weeded out pretty quickly," Seipel comments.

## Artist Citizens and "the Crit"

To a tough, unwavering grip on rigor, VCU sculpture adds something more that defines its special character. "The single most notable quality of this department," King says, "is that it has ambition *and* humanity. A tough set of expectations, side by side with good citizenship. This is what most distinguishes us."

Connie Brown adds, "They come in as artists, but I hope they leave as artist citizens."

Perhaps "the crit," is where citizenship in VCU's arts community exercises its most vigorous and challenging support. Easily lasting several hours, the crit is where students hear from peers on the progress and impact of their work. Faculty and alumni agree that the critique process is crucial to developing artists who are self-evaluators and self-directed.

"At first it's asking a lot of questions, helping students open up just to the task of talking, Collura explains. "It's almost a delicate way of building a lace. You keep adding threads until you've built something that can hold some weight. The more critiques, the more layers, the more beautiful the lace can be."

"They give you a wink, but they always want more," explains Torres about her teachers. "They never leave you alone. They seem to say what will move you along." She remembers many times Elizabeth King quietly offered a timely point that suddenly helped her resolve a dilemma in the work. "It's sometimes scary how well they know what I need to know."

Seipel, says Ferrandi, "is wildly charismatic. You are sure you're going to have a good time being around him."

And you do. But more important, his ideas about art and how it can be exhibited are pretty boundless. He doesn't buy into preconceived ideas."

It was no coincidence that the spring Seipel received the Sculpture Educator Award, student **Genevieve Paterson '01MFA** created a portrait of him, a 30' x12' rug, "made of the hair of 1,500 dogs," she claimed, that "when freshly laid out in the lobby, had a smell that permeated the entire art building"—as did Seipel's spirit. The work was titled, of course, "Top Dog."

The faculty is quick to credit the students themselves for creating the rich atmosphere. "Really magnificent students," says Van Winkle, "a fantastic mix." According to Seipel, "a reality check" against the outside world is necessary to show VCU students "just how good they are. Here, they are competing against each other."

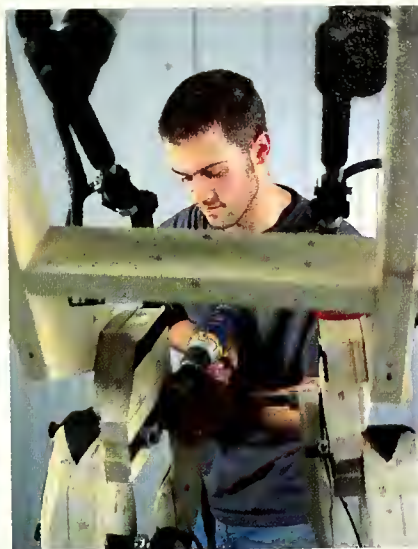
"We're just amazed at the students that we have," says King. "Sometimes I think we operate like a starter batch of sour dough bread that just keeps going. It's as if these graduate students leave behind ghosts that act on new students coming in. Sometimes I think we on the faculty could just keep our mouths shut and it would keep going."

This gifted faculty models the artist citizenship they expect from students. This community shares in triumphs rather than resenting others' successes, something rare in the art world, or any world. "It's not a zero sum game," says Seipel. "When one person wins, that doesn't mean someone has to lose." Carlton Newton mentions his colleagues' generous open-



BACKGROUND PHOTO BY KEVIN SCHINDLER '88BFA





PHOTOS BY KEVIN SCHINDLER '89BFA

First-year graduate students Diana Al-Hadid, Gabriel Bennett and Tim Devoe learn techniques to make their visions actual in six-week modules covering skills from welding to video.

ness to new ideas. "We are all allowed to venture out."

Van Winkle sees the unusually supportive campus arts community as a legacy of department founder, the late Chuck Renick. "Chuck left us with a sense that the kids come first. We all think that this institution is bigger than any one individual. We do our dead level best to keep it running smoothly and free of petty issues."

## "Fresh Meat"

Too often young artists emerging from a campus cocoon, however sternly structured, are brought up short to find that their life in art also means running a small business. "They have to understand their options. We have a responsibility to make their transition as seamless as possible," says Seipel.

In 2003, the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation awarded grants to five art schools—VCU, the Chicago School of the Art Institute, Columbia University's School of the Arts, CalArts and Parsons School of Design—to develop a prototype course to prepare student artists to survive in the off-campus art world.

VCU School of the Arts just completed the first year of its Professional Practices course for all MFA candidates. Students move through practical topics and exercises in portfolio development, oral presentations of their work, grant writing, setting up a small business, tax law, and intellectual property law.

Evidently it takes. Conversations with student artists like Alessandra Torres bristle with as many grant and competition deadlines as art ideas and projects. In fact, each serious concept is rapidly followed by a mental list of possible funding sources. Torres is a Javits Fellow for 2003-05. This spring, her work was part of "SuperSalon," a group show at Samson Projects in Boston featuring the work of artists who studied at The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in summer 2003—where she had a VCU-Skowhegan scholarship.

In 2001, the Departments of Sculpture and Painting/Printmaking parleyed their out of town relations into a bold professional leap for MFA graduates. They got their students' work "out of town." With some hesitancy at first about showing student work in her professional gallery in New York City, Kim Foster agreed to work with Seipel's recent graduates. "Fresh Meat" debuted in summer 2001.

"Well, it hit with phenomenal success, and the *Village Voice* called it one of the ten shows to see," Seipel says. "Everybody assumed it was a professional show. The great thing was that it got this buzz going in New York City about VCU. Now Kim is as excited about the exhibitions as we are. It's changed. It's something that people look forward to."

Summer shows are no longer enough. "Compound Interest" ran this spring at Collaborative Concepts gallery in Beacon, New York, with work of eight recent VCU visiting artists—Bonnie Collura, Diana Cooper, James Siena, Sheila Pepe, John Newman and others—and work they chose by eight VCU graduate students and alumni in Sculpture and Painting/Printmaking: Ginnie Baer '03MFA, Ross Bolick, Sarah Brenneman '00MFA, Ron Johnson '03MFA, David McQueen '03MFA, Sarah Peters '03MFA, Claire Watkins and Fernando Mastrangelo. A recent review of the exhibition in the *New York Times* gave the exhibition and the artists even greater visibility.

There is no sign of slowing down. This summer, VCU sculpture graduate students are taking the work to London. Diana Al-Hadid, Allison Andrews, Sarah Bednarek, Gabriel Bennett, Brian Caverly, Jacq Crowley, Tim Devoe, Fernando Mastrangelo, Alessandra Torres, Claire Watkins, Ruby Westcoat, and Kai Vierstra have been chosen to participate in "Madison's Cave," a group exhibition at the Keith Talent Gallery in London's East End, June 5th to July 11th, 2004.

Applications continue to soar. Admission to the graduate sculpture program has hovered at six percent



# Artist Citizens of the World

acceptance for several years. This winter the school received close to 200 applications from students around the world for only six graduate slots in fall 2004. The students at the graduate level are from a fully international pool—many with substantial bodies of work and critical recognition.

From the dean's office, Seipel continues to dream new directions not just for sculpture but for the entire School of the Arts, which had four top ten rankings from U.S. News. Besides Sculpture and Painting/Printmaking, Communication Arts and Design was ranked 4, and the School of the Arts MFA program was 6. To keep the momentum, Seipel is establishing new contacts in California and other West Coast states.

Seipel's favorite daydream these days is a VCU presence in New York City. "We could have a building there to use for a summer MFA program. During the rest of the year, our faculty and students would have access to it. There's an interesting group of artists in Brooklyn—in the whole eastern corridor—who want a graduate degree but who don't want to relocate or lose their studio," he explains. "It's a big hill to climb. Still just in the thinking stages." There's no doubt he'll figure a way to scale it.

It's the students who encourage him to persevere. "Anyone of these students could be an important force in the visual arts of our time. They're *that* good. And that's what keeps this all really exciting."

Retiring in June, Lester Van Winkle laments, "This school is not nearly as good as we are going to become. It's a *terrible* time to retire."

*Meg Medina is a freelance writer in Richmond who often reviews and writes about the arts.*

*Photos of art provided by artists except where noted.*

"We've really used our alumni base," comments associate dean of the art school, Joe Seipel. "We have graduates in major art centers all over the country. As our students move into, say, Brooklyn or Chicago, we can connect them." Alumni are fiercely successful and intensely loyal to VCU. Here are a few of the alumni who "got the work out of town" and are stretching the ways the rest of us define and interact with contemporary sculpture.

## Tara Donovan '99MFA

### Brooklyn, New York

Seipel enthusiastically assesses alumna Tara Donovan's career: "If you'd bought stock in Tara a year ago, you'd be a millionaire right now." In 2003, Donovan had spreads *Art in America*, *W*, the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice*.

She is best known for using everyday, materials—Elmer's Glue, Scotch tape, toothpicks, pencils—in enormous quantities, with fascinating results. Adding machine tape evokes a group of islands; electrical wire seems to ripple; straws become an optical illusion; tape becomes a fungus. *The Brooklyn Rail*, reviewing her June 2003 show at the Ace Gallery in New York, described her work as, "surprising, labor-intensive, and even perverse... Donovan's work is singular not simply due to the astonishing scale of her obsessive ness, but because of the way she deploys mass capitalism and suburban consumer culture in an aesthetic idiom that one might call 'the minimal, statistical sublime' and which is also a variation on process sculpture." (Daniel Baird, from "The Madness of Ordinary Material" in *The Brooklyn Rail: Critical Perspectives in Arts Politics and Culture*, June 2003)

Donovan's artist statement explains her process: "I choose materials already identified with a basic functional purpose. Beginning with an open experimental approach, I calculate the physical properties of the material such as texture, density, mass, and size that will eventually give rise to a structure or unit when accumulated. Once established, this unit is then reproduced according to given spatial conditions and collected in various ways to discover how it behaves visually in a population. I give particular attention to patterning, configuration, and light absorption/reflection in deciding how to then unify that population, but the final form evolves organically from the material itself via its innate properties and structure. Installed specifically for each exhibition space, these forms function as fields of visual activity that reveal distinctive characteristics with each shifting viewpoint."

Donovan has received grants from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, and The Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation: The Space Program.

In 2001, she won The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Competition and she is the 2003 Augustus Saint Gaudens Memorial Sculpture Fellow. In the year she graduated with her MFA, Donovan was invited to participate in the 1999 Whitney Biennial and had a solo exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art's Hemicycle Gallery in Washington. Her recent work was featured in a solo exhibition at Ace Gallery, New York, from March through July 2003.

## George Ferrandi '93BFA

### Brooklyn, New York

Super Silver Monkey, a super hero who's drawn into others' emotional crises and his cast of fellow characters are all the art of George Ferrandi, a player in the Brooklyn art scene. "He's constantly failing," explains Ferrandi. "He's a tragic hero." The series, she says, is subtly influenced by another aspect of her work—church restoration, especially the iconography of the saints and their interrelationships.

Ferrandi moved to New York on September 10, 2001 with no clear plans. On her first morning in New York City, the World Trade Center collapsed. Her parents restored churches in Baltimore, so Ferrandi jumped in. She finds profound joy in restoring objects with such a rich history. "It's one of the few times when other people—not the artist—are passionately invested in the piece. These statues are not thought of as inanimate objects. It's just so meaningful to people."

For example. She had restored a Madonna for a Latino congregation in Brooklyn and arrived late with the delivery. Ferrandi stood at the church doors waiting for Mass to end. "I had the statue on a hand truck draped in a white sheet. The priest saw me and took it as a sign. 'Mary has come to reclaim her church!' As I uncovered the statue and brought it up the main aisle, the choir broke out into Ave Maria. People began weeping. Children started touching her hands. It was amazing."



*character analysis: chavish no.s 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 9.5: an improbable narrative wrung from non-being and loneliness*



On VCU: "It was an incredibly formative time for me. It's more than a foundation. It's been defining. I remember Elizabeth King saying 'complete the cycle.' Starting the piece, struggling through it, finishing the piece. The emphasis on seeing it through remains important to me."

Ferrandi earned her MFA at Ohio State University and taught sculpture and electronic inter media at the University of Florida. Super Silver Monkey and his enigmatic sidekick / potential assassin, Chavish, are featured in "HOME" at the University of New England's Gallery in Portland, Maine, through July 11; and in a show featuring cartoon or comic-influenced art at the Pelham Arts Center, 155 Fifth Ave. in Pelham, NY, September 10-October 22. She returns to VCU for an alumni show this fall. [www.supersilver-monkey.com](http://www.supersilver-monkey.com).

#### **Morgan Kennedy '00MFA Baltimore, Maryland**

At the heart of Morgan Kennedy's work is an exploration of the dream world. "It started with issues of shamahism, with roots in anthropology. Where are the places that we go to when we sleep at night?"

While at VCU, Kennedy made "large biomorphic mesh forms about space and shelter." His focus is making objects where the viewer could take in both the interior and the exterior of the work.

"Why do I keep making caves? It's a sense of going into this space. It has to do with time and with another dimension. I think there's a sensual, subconscious instinctual quality in my work. Now I'm trying to abandon past materials and thinking a lot about the cave and about recording movement. It's an exciting time."

On VCU: Kennedy came to VCU because "I was overwhelmed by the facilities." Ultimately, however, it was the people in the program who pushed his growth as an artist. "I liked the friendly open manner of everyone there, but it was still demanding. It was like going from elementary school right to college. The caliber of demand was so strong. There were times that felt like the hardest of my life. But I learned so much. I've been so blessed.



*Morgan Kennedy is an artist-spehunker, exploring caves and finding doors to—?*

They made me walk the plank and made me get out there. The ranking is the ranking. It's all subjective. But VCU is a great place. It was a great time for sure."

Morgan Kennedy teaches 3-dimensional design and different levels of sculpture at George Mason University (his undergraduate alma mater). He has exhibited in New York, Richmond, Washington D.C., and Turkey. He has been awarded the Eben Demarest Trust grant and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Foundation Professional Fellowship. In summer 2003, Kennedy completed a Bemis Residency, a program in that brings up to 35 artists from around the world to warehouse studios in Omaha, Nebraska, to create work, share ideas, and engage the public.

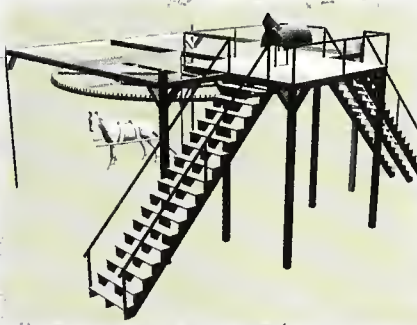
#### **Shannon Wright '90BFA San Jose, California.**

Shannon Wright meant to register as a painting major. "I accidentally turned in my course registration forms to the wrong place. But, by the end of my first sculpture class, I had changed my major."

Wright works primarily in kinetic sculpture, making mechanical objects that become installation pieces. They are an environment—and a highly labor-intensive creation. She faced the familiar artist's struggle to balance earning a living with somehow making time to create her work.

To ease the strain, she has begun to delegate aspects of projects. "I never did believe in this, but I'm starting to have to," she admits. To reduce time in the woodshop, she recently had some machine parts laser-cut from acrylic. She is also using animation as a planning tool as well as a finished product. Typically, she has made working prototypes of her sculptures before making the true version. For the past two years she has worked with animator and fellow sculpture alum Frank Pichel '88BFA, who has turned her technical drawings into animations of the proposed machines. "I can realize them much faster in the form of animations," she explains.

On VCU: "VCU has had the most influence on me of all the places I've been, both as a student and teacher. They demanded



*"Ride," Shannon Wright with Frank Pichel, a motion graphics designer in LA.*

self-sufficiency. They wanted you to become proficient in all the areas you possibly could. You might have to learn to make and edit videos, and weld, and know whatever it took to make what you wanted to make. I think the faculty all exemplified that way of thinking."

VCU critiques, the most rigorous she has ever encountered, were long and intense; but they gave students the sense that their choices mattered. The group learned a delicate balance between support and the push to improve. "We were competitive but relying on the group. We paid attention to each other; we were indebted to each other. We were both trying to outdo and be close-knit."

Wright holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. As coordinator of 3-D Foundations at San Jose State University, she teaches Foundations classes in 3-dimensional art, and upper-level classes in Spatial Arts (sculpture and installation art). Wright had a show at VCU in February. She currently has a video installation at the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, and an upcoming show in Lake Tahoe in the fall.

A few more recent awards to VCU Sculpture alumni—

#### **Stephen Althouse '75MFA**

2003 Fulbright: Artist-in-Residence, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Liège, Belgium

#### **Kim Baranoski '00MFA**

2001 Joan Mitchell Award

#### **Tim Blum '92MFA**

1992 Jacob Javits Fellowship  
2000 Pollock-Krasner Grant

#### **Lisa Bradley '01BFA**

2003 NEA Professional Development Fellow  
2004 Resident Fellow, Whitney Museum

#### **Tony Cokes '84MFA**

2002 Creative Capital Grant

#### **Teresita Fernandez '92MFA**

2001 Tiffany Grant; 2003 Guggenheim Fellow

#### **Ledelle Moe '96MFA**

2002 Joan Mitchell Award

#### **Kellie Murphy '98MFA**

1998 Bemiss Foundation Residency in Omaha  
1998 Joan Mitchell Award

#### **Beth Solin '00MFA**

2001 Pollock-Krasner Grant



# Forensic Files: VCU

BY JORIEL FOLTZ

On a recent episode of the wildly popular CBS series *CSI: Crime Scene Investigations*, Investigator Warrick Brown is blindsided in court when the judge declares a bloody knife recovered from a suspected killer's car inadmissible due to an improper search. Investigators have only twenty-four hours to find and process new evidence, or their suspect will be released. The ensuing thrill ride of shadowy lab footage and tough-talking detective work is typical of *CSI* and its spin-off *CSI: Miami*, shows that top a long list of weekly dramas and documentaries featuring forensic science.

In real life, forensic scientists do fascinating work, applying scientific methods and analysis to support the criminal justice system. They can find and process DNA from the perspiration on a gun grip or water vapor breathed onto a scarf. They can determine whether a driver was pressing the brake or the gas at the time of a vehicular death. They can match a bottle cap used to cook drugs with the bottle it came from. They can ascertain the identity of almost any mysterious white powder. And they can pull fingerprints from surfaces as unlikely as concrete or wire screen.

But these feats of analytical brilliance rarely, if ever, occur during a forty-four minute whirlwind of rule-breaking adventures set to a rock and roll soundtrack.

While shows like *Quincy, M.E.* dramatized the use of science to solve crime as early as the 1970s, the media obsession with forensic science really took off after the 1995 O.J. Simpson trial, in which DNA evidence played a pivotal role. This wave of public attention has flooded universities across the country with students eager to become forensic scientists.

VCU's undergraduate Forensic Science Program has grown from fourteen students who changed their majors when the program was first introduced in spring 2001, to 430 students enrolled in the program in fall, 2003. The graduate program accepts only twelve students each year from more than 200 applications.

In spite of an occasional need to reinforce the less glamorous realities of *real* forensic science, the media hype is a terrific motivator. "It's an energized program," says new program director Dr. Bill Eggleston, who has taught genetics and molecular biology at VCU since 1993. "It's very exciting. The students are enthusiastic and very proactive." The clamor to get into these programs creates intensity from the beginning. "Folks look around and see the excitement just within their group."

Students will need all the enthusiasm they can muster to thrive in the demanding interdisciplinary program. Professors and practicing forensic scientists give students a solid foundation of biology, chemistry, physics and math, while also building their understanding of the criminal justice system, forensic techniques, and the art of relaying scientific findings through written reports and oral testimony.

Undergraduates in the biology track will go on to further study or careers in DNA or crime scene analysis. Students interested in areas other than DNA analysis, like drug analysis, firearms, tool marks or trace evidence, take the chemistry track.

In 2000, Dr. Stephen Gottfredson, dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, began working with Dr. Paul Ferrera of the Virginia Division of Forensic Science to develop a forensic science program in the College. The undergraduate program began in 2001 as a track within the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies. "We used that to incubate the program and set a solid foundation," says Sherry Mikuta, the program's first director. At VCU, "we were starting up before the influx of forensic science programs, and we've developed an interdisciplinary program that we think is solid and well rounded." In March 2002, VCU's BS in Forensic Science was approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

The graduate program has deeper roots. VCU has had a forensic science track within the Master's program in criminal justice since 1984. The master's program was approved to start in spring 2004—the only Master of Forensic Science in Virginia and one of only 13 in the U.S. VCU's program is also one of the few in the country in partnership with a forensic science laboratory, the Richmond laboratory of the Virginia Division of Forensic Science. (See sidebar.)

## Mysteries in Maggots

Undergraduate Jill Grizzard '05 has been reading medical encyclopedias and crime novels since middle school, even before the hype hit TV. "I knew what I wanted to do," she says, "even though nobody knew what it was." Now in her third year in the biology track, Grizzard plans to earn an MD and go on to certification as a forensic pathologist/ medical examiner. "The forensic science degree includes most of the same basic sciences you need for medical school, but it differs in that there's a *mystery* to it, a curiosity. It is not as cut-and-dried as a strict pre-medical program."



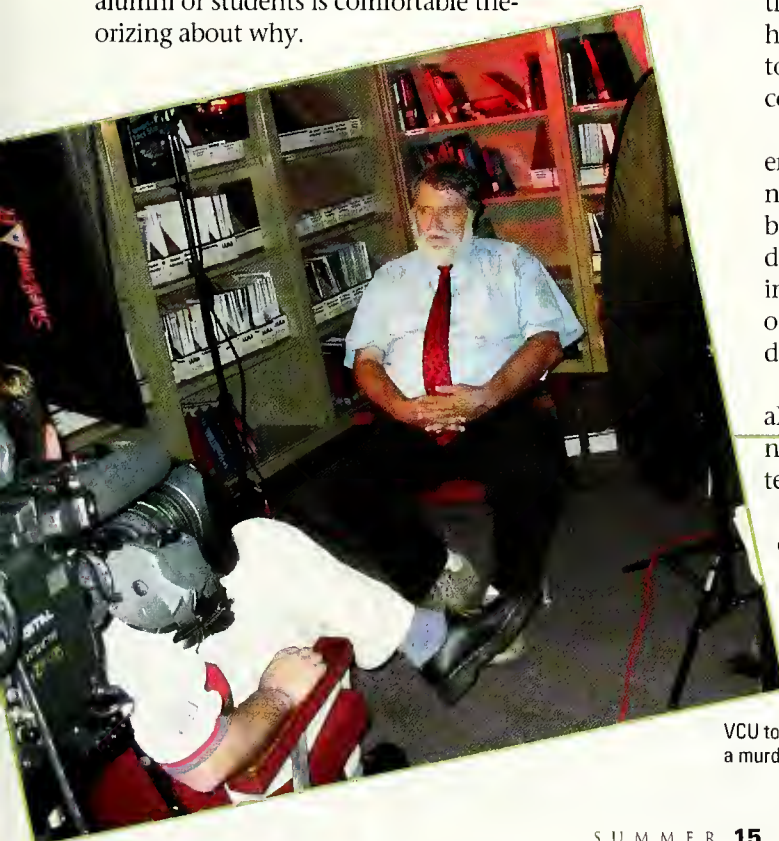




Grizzard's passion for her chosen field is palpable. "This program is no joke," she says emphatically, underlining the rigor of the curriculum. Like many of her peers, she wants as much hands-on experience as she can get before graduation. "When I first came here," she says, "I was cleaning out maggot jars—but getting acclimated to the lab." She used her spring break in 2003 to shadow pathologist Dr. Rob Lippman in a weeklong externship at McGuire Department of Veterans Affairs Virginia Medical Center through the VCU Alumni Association. Next fall, she hopes for an internship with a criminal law attorney, "because one day I'll be on the stand giving expert testimony."

Grizzard is not alone in her focus and determination. She is president of an active Forensic Student Science Club which organizes career workshops and brings in guest speakers from various forensic science specialties. The idea is to help students think through career options, get experience they need, and make important connections.

Grizzard herself is part of a minor mystery in her field. At VCU and in universities across the country, students in forensic science are overwhelmingly female. With true scientific integrity, none of the VCU faculty, alumni or students is comfortable theorizing about why.



When pressed, some suggest that perhaps women pay greater attention to detail, are more patient, feel less threatened by forensic science than by a more traditional chemistry or biology degree, or are simply more curious than men.

As far as this being "an unsuitable job for a woman" (apologies to mystery writer P.D. James), Grizzard says she rarely thinks about that because she's so used to attending classes full of women. But she does enjoy confounding gender expectations. "It makes me more ambitious for someone to think, 'a girl doing that,'" she confesses. "It kind of proves a point."

### As Seen on TV

One of VCU's real experts, toxicologist Dr. Al Poklis, affiliate professor of forensic science, appeared on Crime TV's *Forensic Files* last fall, discussing a case. A woman died of kidney failure after about a year of illness; her symptoms had been attributed to side effects of her medication for manic-depression. Investigators asked Poklis to review the entire case files. The kidney failure which killed her is not an effect of psychoactive medication. A blood test in the hospital before she died revealed, too late, ethylene glycol. Her illness and kidney deterioration had begun when she married—and got better when her husband was out of town. Ultimately, he confessed to poisoning her with antifreeze. (It's not so hard to cover the taste, Poklis says.)

In nearly 40 years in his field, Poklis has seen some enormous changes. The most dramatic changes are technology driven, he says. "Thirty-five years ago, we could barely detect morphine in 25 ml of blood. Now you can detect morphine in hair samples, in picograms. That's an increase of 10,000 times the sensitivity. Things that were once almost impossible to find are now easily detectable."

There has also been "a tremendous overall growth in all the areas of forensic science. Forensic laboratories are now much more available, even in smaller towns." And technology was not the only force driving the field.

He explains, "When I was a young man, people got drunk. Almost no one had heard of cocaine." In fact, Poklis published one of the first reports about death from a cocaine overdose. A heroin epidemic on the East Coast in the late '60s ushered in the drug era, followed by the hippies using psychedelics, marijuana-

VCU toxicologist, Dr. Al Poklis, analyzes a murder by antifreeze for *Crime TV*.



na and other drugs. The '70s saw tremendous changes in social mores, he comments, including sex and drug use.

"Now there are all kinds of drug abuse and overdoses, and a tremendous increase in violent crime related to drug abuse. Drug abuse now permeates every field of medicine—pediatrics and obstetrics, disease control, public health. At the same time, there's been a huge development in ER technology to keep people alive in spite of an overdose."

In his teaching, with both undergraduate and graduate students, Poklis emphasizes careful documentation and personal integrity. "Sometimes you can't say what the cops or prosecutor would like you to say."

Beyond that, "my big concern is to give students some historical perspective. We discuss the history of lead toxicity in the U.S., for example. In the '50s, lots and lots of children were suffering from lead encephalopathy; now it's a pocketed issue in pediatrics. I want students to think critically, and to integrate what they're learning with other subjects, their own lives, with its impact on society as a whole. I don't see any point in just having them regurgitate lists."

### Of Drugs and Bugs

While working under Poklis toward her PhD in Forensic Toxicology (Summer, 2004), Michelle Peace has taught almost every core course in the undergraduate forensic science curriculum. "I've seen the program mature from a few courses to a full-fledged bachelor's program in its own right," she says. "What we have now, we've worked really hard to get."

Peace is the expert who will explain the meanings of maggots at the crime scene to students like Grizzard. More precisely, her area could be described as "drugs and bugs." Peace is an entomotoxicologist. Her research makes links between insects found on or near cadavers and drugs that the deceased may have consumed before death. "Insects just happen to be really great preservation vials for drugs, because essentially you are what you eat," she explains. "In cases of severe decomposition, exhumation and burnings, you can use insects as your specimens for toxicology analysis. The first case in which insects were used as the toxicology specimen to understand the episode of intoxication was right here in Virginia in 1980."

The life cycles of insects found near a body can also be used to help estimate the time of death. Peace is working with other scientists to build a database for forensic entomologists and toxicologists to understand how drugs affect insect life cycles and how drugs affect different species. Another research

goal is to determine whether a correlation can be drawn between the amount of drugs found in an insect and the amount consumed by the deceased. "We don't know if we can do that or not."

Peace started her graduate studies in 1995, the year of the O.J. Simpson trial, which she agrees was a "turning point" for forensic science. "Quality assurance and standards and good practices in crime scene investigation and evidence collection have all matured," she says. But some things have not changed. "Forensic science has always been an exciting field to be in because it's always evolving and often evolving very rapidly, so the nature of forensic science itself is about change and growth and new application of new ideas and new application of old ideas."

### Expert Witness

Former police officer Mason Byrd '02MPA/H&S has a joint appointment in the department of criminal justice and forensic science. "Forensics by definition has to do with the law, and that was a piece we initially were missing on the faculty," says Mikuta.

When Byrd joined a municipal police department in Florida in 1987, he had only two years of college. During his ten years on the force, he worked patrol, evidence collection, field training, narcotics, vice, community oriented policing and finally internal affairs. As a policeman in the community, "I was telling kids 'Stay in school. Education is important. When you







"Insects are great preservation vials for drugs, because, essentially, you are what you eat," Michelle Peace (right) explains to Jill Grizzard.

A handful of U.S. university programs in forensic science have an ongoing partnership with an accredited forensic laboratory, and VCU's is one of them. At the Richmond laboratory of the Virginia Division of Forensic Science (DFS), VCU students benefit from expert instruction, sophisticated equipment and incomparable networking opportunities. Dr. Paul Ferrara, director of Virginia Division of Forensic Science, chairs an Advisory Committee that oversees both the baccalaureate and master's programs.

At the Richmond lab of the DFS, **Ann Davis '90MS/H&S** specializes in firearms, tool marks, and vehicle lamps. Like many of her colleagues, Davis trains VCU students in her areas of expertise. In recent lab exercises students restored a serial number obliterated from a gun and determined whether a vehicle lamp was on or off at the time of an accident. Students have also been challenged to analyze the trajectory of a bullet based on the hole it created in a cardboard box "wall" and to determine how far a gun was from the target when it was fired.

Davis thinks her own field is the most exciting area of forensic science, although fundamental techniques have not changed much in 13 years. "These are the same types of examinations we've always conducted," she says. "The advances are things that we're doing to standardize documentation and address recent courtroom challenges to our science." Studies have been done to validate specific testing procedures and determine their error rates. In February, the FBI announced research which discredited a forensic assumption that bullets of the same batch would have the same chemical composition; they had found (rarely) bullets of different batches with the same composition. A match in composition between bullets found in a suspect's home and those at a crime scene is no longer as conclusive an evidence of guilt.

Communication and cooperation between laboratories, police and prosecutors have also taken some leaps forward, Davis says.

have a degree, you can write your own ticket."

Unwilling to remain "a hypocrite," he took a leave to go back to school, finished a bachelor's in criminal justice and then added a law degree and a VCU Master's in Public Administration, both by 2002.

"These students are scientists, not lawyers," Byrd says. "I try to introduce them to the criminal justice system and work them through the information they will need, from crime scene to courtroom. Their job doesn't end until there is a conviction."

The scientists are fascinated, and they catch on fast, Byrd says, noting that "the analytic brain they need for organic chemistry is

In the new National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN), crime gun evidence is imaged and entered into a computer system that can search for links between crimes across jurisdictional boundaries.

The Integrated Ballistic Identification System (IBIS) computer and imaging equipment shares space in Davis's lab with rows of comparison microscopes; a firing range and water tank for test-firing; a fully adjustable mannequin named Fred who can be dressed in clothing of death or injury. Dozens of storage racks are filled with guns, tools, ammunition, reference materials—and a 500-case backlog of evidence waiting to be analyzed. Settled in her office surrounded by stacks of files and mementos, Davis describes her career path.

"I always wanted to be in forensic science, from the time I can remember." She started out as a drug chemist, planning to go to medical school and become a pathologist; but a couple of ricochets altered her trajectory. "Ultimately, I think I got the best of both worlds. Every day is a new adventure, and I don't have to face a dead body every morning."

She was trained as a firearms examiner in 1984 and has worked for DFS since 1985. A few years later, while pursuing her master's degree at VCU, she taught her field to her fellow students. "At VCU I learned a lot more about other areas of forensic science, and I got a good sense of how the various sections can work together."

When Davis started the field. There were only a handful of limited training—dominated by the international Association of female members when she joined the international Association of Firearm & Tool Mark Examiners. Now there are more than 80 women in the organization, and Davis is the second female president.

Speaking from her long experience, she warns that students will need more than good grades to succeed in forensic science. They will need common sense, hard work, and absolute commitment. "Some of the best students don't get it," she says. "You have to be right every day, 100 percent of the time. There are no days when you can get away with less than your best. There is no room for error."



the same kind of brain they need for working through a case." Some cases come right out of the newspaper. "The Kobe Bryant case was especially relevant. The semen in the victim's underpants was a major piece of evidence, and it turned out not to be his."

Even more than the technical aspects on evidence law, "I stress ethics heavily. What I emphasize over and over is their personal credibility and integrity. Some people say that ethics goes without saying. No, it doesn't." Byrd mentions "forensic superstars" whose evidence got convictions. "They were committing fraud. They'd say their sample was so small there's nothing left; no one else can test it to check their results."

Byrd reminds students of their special responsibility to the jury. "Jurors can understand from their own experience that eyewitnesses might be wrong. They *believe* you, so you'd better be right."

Inevitably policy issues arise. Touchy search and seizure issues develop when some of the victims of a murder—relatives and friends—are also suspects.

Students discuss statutes like Virginia's 21-day rule. If new evidence proving



Forensic scientists have a special responsibility to jurors, says Mason Byrd to students. "They believe you, so you better be right."

innocence comes to light more than 21 days after the trial court's final judgment, it's inadmissible. The only recourse is a pardon from the governor—rarely given. (And the pardon makes no judgment of innocence.) Recent laws have made an exception for new DNA evidence. "With VCU's diverse group of students discussing these topics, you'll get an array of responses. This is good. You really need to let students know that there's more than one opinion on the issues."

Just last year Virginia did approve a mechanism allowing a prisoner to petition for a writ of actual innocence (and release) if he or she can present human biological evidence, such as DNA, proving innocence. Byrd explains, "Typically this would happen when somebody was convicted before the technology existed to get a DNA fingerprint from the evidence left behind, either because the sample size was very small or the sample was degraded. So, at their trial, they were unable to use DNA

evidence to prove their innocence." Two bills to expand the procedure to nonbiological evidence were before the legislature this spring.

Byrd hopes to start taking pro bono cases of Virginia inmates who claim "actual innocence" of the crimes they are in prison for, and he expects to be swamped with requests. "I'll need help reviewing the information and reading trial transcripts. I'd like to use students who have taken my class to help me determine what evidence was used and what evidence still exists."

## Slices of Life

DNA identification is a huge new area in forensic science, developing rapidly and affecting many people's lives. The "actually innocent" are being exonerated through DNA evidence. Naming the dead restores their connection with living generations.

Molecular pathologist Dr. Tracey Dawson Cruz joined the faculty in fall 2003, from the forensic science faculty at George Washington University. "Projects in my research lab are aimed at increasing the sensitivity of DNA analysis for human identification. Many cases in crime labs are signed out as inconclusive," she explains, "because the remains are too badly burned or damaged, or have otherwise been exposed to environmental elements for too long."

In Dawson Cruz's Senior Forensic DNA course, students are taken through "all the major procedures used in traditional forensic DNA labs, including STR genotyping ("profiling") and sequencing, using genetic analyzers and other instruments frequently encountered in crime laboratory settings." In fact, Cruz says, "Dean Gottfredson was able to obtain funding for a brand new, \$100,000 high-tech sequencer dedicated to research and teaching in the forensic science program. Getting our own equipment is an important step."

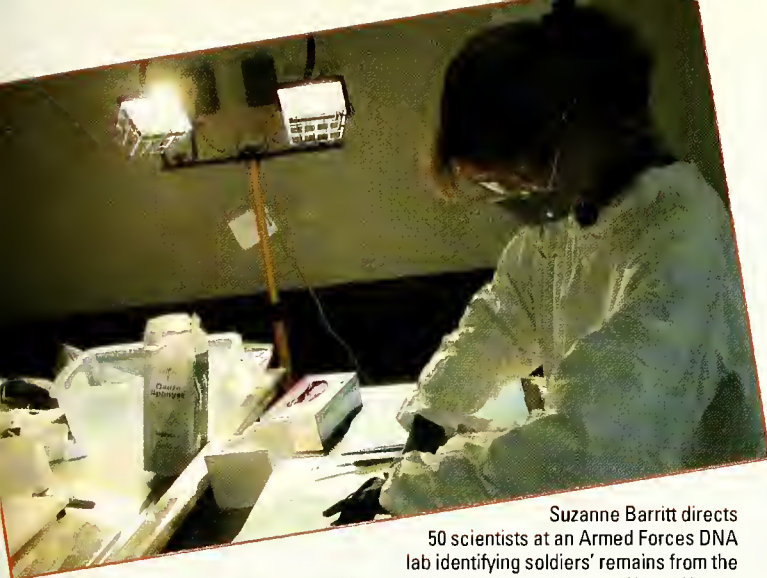
Students are trained from the beginning in federal Quality Assurance standards and how they impact work in the laboratory. "Students are expected to make corrections in a certain way; they make lab notes in ink, not pencil; they learn how to prevent contamination of evidence, and how to prepare legal reports." VCU graduates in the biology track are well-prepared for entry-level positions in DNA or serology. "Our graduates aren't shocked at the high quality standards they will find when they start work in a crime lab."

Adding lecture and theory to hands-on lab experiences, majors learn "basic concepts of forensic molecular biology and chemistry and study keystone cases involving DNA identification—including the O.J. Simpson case, the Thomas Jefferson-Sally Hemmings case in kinship identification, and the newer technologies used in identifying victim remains after the September 11 attacks."

In addition to forensic science courses and heavy doses of biology and chemistry, majors must complete genetics, statistics, and biochemistry. Dawson Cruz observes, "Our graduates have broad interests and are







Suzanne Barritt directs 50 scientists at an Armed Forces DNA lab identifying soldiers' remains from the Vietnam War, the Korean War and World War II.

prepared to pursue a wide variety of careers." Some go directly to jobs in private or public forensic science laboratories, but many graduates in the biology track go on to graduate and professional schools. "Forensic Sciences students have the background to enter medical school, law school, or graduate programs in any of the natural or life sciences. Our graduates are competitive and are succeeding in many areas of science."

Alumna **Suzanne Barritt '93MS/H&S** can show students where a career path might lead. Barritt directs one of the largest DNA ID labs in the country, the Mitochondrial Unit of the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory in Maryland. She supervises a team of about 50 scientists. "Our main mission," she explains "is to assist the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, which is based in Hawaii, in identifying the remains of service members from previous conflicts."

Barritt and her colleagues identify remains from the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and even some from World War II, by comparing DNA from the remains with DNA from blood submitted by family members. In each case, there's a different scenario as to how the remains were lost and recovered. For example, the remains of many Americans killed in the Korean War were turned over to the U.S. by the Korean government, but "a lot are still there. Teams go over there and excavate," says Barritt. "Accounting Command does all the legwork, and they send a small cutting to us."

Last year, the lab processed over 653 specimens, as well as over 1,800 blood references from the families of missing service members. "In any laboratory setting," says Barritt, "you can become consumed with the day to day activities and forget about the mission and how many lives you are positively affecting." To avoid that, scientists from her lab attend family briefings each month; they explain the status of the project, answer

questions about the science of DNA analysis, and listen to families tell their stories.

"Occasionally we get the chance to present the ID packet to the family," she continues. "At that point, you are providing closure to that family. You're sitting there in their home helping them cope with something they've dealt with for years."

Barritt credits VCU with giving her a solid foundation for her current career. "When I left the program, I felt well prepared to go into any discipline I wanted.

Compared to other programs, VCU offers hands-on experience that can't be found anywhere else."

Barritt plans to stay with what she's doing. "I'd like to see this mission through. I'm pretty close to it. I'm not sure how many people can say they enjoy coming into work every day, but I'm one of those people."

While the public continues to be fascinated with forensic science and crime solving, Peace sees VCU students quickly rising above the glamour. They realize that to succeed, they'll need a competitive edge, so they get motivated early in their academic careers.

Beyond that, "you have to be a certain caliber of person," Peace explains. "You have to have a certain moral and ethical standard built within you not only to do this work but to be hired. Agencies are not going to hire someone who has a questionable history."

The work and their ambition seem to draw them together. "It's a tight-knit group," Mason Byrd observes, adding "These students are really smart." And Byrd has absolute confidence in their integrity. "All these students will be good representatives of VCU."

*For more about VCU's BS and MS in forensic Science, go to [www.has.vcu.edu/forensics](http://www.has.vcu.edu/forensics).*

*Joriel Foltz is a freelance writer in Richmond who often writes for VCU's alumni magazines.*



Dr. Tracey Dawson Cruz (right) teaches Denise Rodier and Kristen Lewis to use various equipment for genetic identification, including this new, \$100,000 high-tech sequencer for genetic analysis.





come and go. Some guys got married; some guys had full time jobs while they were in school." Shimchick, an advertising student at RPI in the Virginia Tech extension program, transferred to Tech after two years.

Dick Fisher '71BS/B played varsity baseball until his junior year. "I lost my arm," recalls Fisher, "I was looking for something to do. These weren't the days of big money sports. It was about competition and school spirit," he says.

Eddie Swink '72BA/H&S joined the crew in 1969 as a coxswain (cock-sn).



JOE MAHONEY

Coach D. K. Waybright remembers exactly when it all ended. "May 9, 1972 was the last official day of the crew," he recalls, leaning back at his desk at his West Grace Street office. A month later, Hurricane Agnes saturated the East Coast, causing Richmond's worst flood in a century. "It destroyed our boathouse and much of our equipment," says Waybright. "I had anticipated it," adds the president and owner of Waybright Investments briskly. "I had double insurance." VCU's athletic department was highly appreciative of his foresight and gave the insurance money to the basketball program. Thus ended crew's brief six-year history at VCU.

But wait a minute. Back up a bit. Crew at RPI? How did a sport usually associated with the icy waters of New England's private universities ever row its way up the James River to southern, urban Richmond Professional Institute?

Enter Coach Bowles. Donald Bowles, who taught retailing at RPI's School of Distribution, had been an alternate on the 1926 U.S. Olympic crew after rowing for Harvard. Bowles found eight tall, lanky RPI undergrads to form the first crew in 1966-67.

### A CHOPPY START

"Coach Bowles told us, "Because you are the first crew at this university, you will be the worst crew," remembers Frank Shimchick '70AS, "but he knew that we were gonna do nothing but get better. We were at the bottom of our sport, getting beaten by freshmen crews at other universities."

With no scholarships and rowers drafted from other sports, the crew had a motley, ever-changing lineup. "I don't know anyone who actually rowed four years," says Shimchick. "Guys would

Lightweight coxswains don't row, but sit in the stern of the boat and steer while calling out the rhythm of the strokes. "I was on the golf team," remembers Swink—now business director at the Virginia State Golf Association Foundation. "They got me to be the coxswain because I had a loud voice and I was tiny. I had no experience guiding a shell."

"Rowing was not the number one thing on our brains," Swink comments. "We didn't eat and sleep it. It's amazing we did as well as we did." Shimchick adds, "A lot of guys went out for the sport because it was new to them. And let's be honest, the ladies really liked watching this sport." So their attitude toward training was at times... well, comfortable.

# ROW

"Because you are the first crew at this university, you will be the worst"



Shimchick remembers the daily run from Shafer Street down to the 14th Street bridge. "Everyone would start out together, and there would always be a couple of guys lagging behind." The laggards would hitch a ride and arrive at the boathouse first. "Coach Bowles thought those guys were in terrific shape."

"Picture us, the '60s hippie gang, running through the middle of three-piece-suit Main Street," adds Paul Kauffmann. "People looked at us like we had three heads." Mel Denton '70BS/H&S was a 27-year-old sophomore, a Henrico police officer on leave to get his degree—the crew, of course, called him "Dad." Denton rowed "stroke" position in the stern of the shell, setting the pace for the other rowers. "Coach Bowles looked to 'Dad' to put some of the younger guys under his wing," says Shimchick. "He coached us through Mel as much as he coached us himself."

The training boat was a heavy steel barge, a vessel with which the crew had a kind of hate-hate relationship. "It was heavy as can be," says Denton, "You could hardly row it." Shimchick puts his oar in: "How it ever floated no one knew because the damn thing took about 10 guys to push it down the ramp into the water."

Some students who played other sports called crew "a sissy sport." Hardly, says Denton. "In rowing, each stroke uses every muscle group from the calves to the wrists. In a race you do it about 300 times, pulling a weight of about 2000 pounds through the water, non-stop for 6 to 8 minutes. If you let up at all to rest or catch your breath, you lose the race. I challenge any athlete to row all-out in a 2000-meter race and then call it 'a sissy sport.'"

## THE COMMONWEALTH BARGE CLUB

The University funded Crew exactly \$1 to make them an official student club, so they struggled each season to stay afloat financially. It could be a hard sell.

"Funny looks? All the time," says Shimchick. Denton remembers, "We were standing out on Shafer Court with our crew shirts on saying, 'Please support us, please give money.' People would say, 'What do you guys do in that sport?' You'd have to explain what it was."

In 1967 Denton and Shimchick, with Steve Andrews '71BS/B and design students Ed Sargent and Mark Fuller, founded The Commonwealth Barge Club, which became the moral and financial lifeblood of the crew. The Barge Club raised all the money for the crew's racing shells (boats), oars, uniforms, and travel expenses. They sold t-shirts in Shafer Court, they threw benefit parties. Coach Waybright solicited Reynolds Metals to help build a shell carrier for road trips. Eventually the Club became an unofficial fraternity with its own house.

## MAKING A SPLASH

In and out of the water, VCU Crew rowed against a swift current, but they barged on upstream, getting better each season. By 1970, rowing was a varsity sport, with VCU funding for a new eight-man shell and other equipment. Picnicking students regularly gathered along the grassy banks of the James for home races as the crew rowed from south of the 14th Street Bridge to the finish line at Ancarrow's Marina on the south side of the river.

Road trips took them to regattas in Washington, Philadelphia and South Carolina. Still the long-haired "hippie

first crew"—Coach Donald Bowles, 1966

BY DAVID READY



team," they were beating clean-cut southerners at The Citadel or Eastern Carolina. "Yeah, that was fun," George Mosby '72BS/B chuckles. The crew was often trailed out of town by caravans of eager boosters. "We had cheerleaders with us, if you can imagine," says Swink. "How do you cheer knowing you'll only see the boat at the finish line? It was ridiculous. Vans broke down. We took our own cars."

Those trips were a lark, but also part of VCU history, as Paul Kauffmann realizes now. "The school had just merged with the Medical College of Virginia and

changed its name from RPI to VCU. It was going through a metamorphosis into a major university, and the name change really crystallized that. When we traveled to Georgetown or Philadelphia for races, people would say, 'What's VCU? Where's that school?' In a way, we were early ambassadors of VCU."

When Bowles retired in 1969, Waybright took over. He had no connection with VCU (although his son **Jon Waybright '90BA/H&S** is an alumnus), but he had rowed in high school and came to take a look. "I could see they needed help." Waybright's coaching

style was more aggressive, and he liked to add a psychological edge.

Looking for added incentive before a big race against Notre Dame, Coach Waybright convinced the crew that he had broken into a museum display case and stolen the oars from the 1968 Olympic Championship rowing crew. He warned an awestruck crew, "If you use these oars and let Notre Dame whip your butt, you've insulted that Olympic crew."

"They bought it, hook, line and sinker," Waybright crows. "They rowed their butts off and beat Notre Dame."

The crew's biggest test was the annual Dad Vail Regatta, a huge race of east coast crews on Philadelphia's Schuylkill River. In 1971, one VCU crew finished 3rd overall at the Dad Vail, their best finish on record. That year a VCU Crew of students who stayed in Richmond for the summer won a gold medal in the Pelham Bay Regatta in New York City. So VCU was asked to row in the Miami Invitational in March 1972, an international race with crews from Mexico and Guatemala, and—for the first time in a U.S. race—England's top crew, from Cambridge University.

VCU's by then dream team included "several champion rowers, including oarsmen Billy Gills, who won the World Lightweight Championship, and Ray Tolson '73BFA. Although he didn't go to Florida, coxswain **Jim Storie's '73BS/E** high school team had won its division of the 1969 Henley Regatta in England. Again, Waybright psyched up his crew. Leaving six inches of snow behind, VCU Crew drove to Miami, challenging their way south, racing other crews and usually winning. D.K. phoned in daily results to the student paper. Someone drove the papers to the team en route, and D.K. showed them in print, "See how great you are!"

Of 30 teams, Cambridge came in first among the top six. VCU's Heavyweight Varsity team finished seventh of 18 in the consolation race. The Cambridge team, says Mosby, "looked like eight Jim Thorpes—taller than us and all the same." Traditionally the winners take the shirts of the other teams; later, some of the Cambridge crew exchanged their jerseys, emblazoned with Richard the Lionheart, with VCU rowers. "So it was quite an experience," D.K. adds.





## A CLEAR REFLECTION

In fall of 2003, more than 30 years after VCU crew was swept away, Mel Denton and Frank Shimchick ran into each other in Richmond. "We had such a great time catching up," says Shimchick, "we said why don't we have a reunion?" Through the Internet and the VCU Alumni Association, they collected Barge Club members scattered as far as Florida, Colorado, and Arizona.

On November 15, 2003, sixteen former members and ten spouses gathered at the Bottega Bistro in Richmond. "Even though it's been 30 years, when we get in the same room with one another, it's like no time has passed," Shimchick muses. "It's like we just crawled out of the shell and we're sharing a beer."

His wife Brenda smiles. "It's rare to see people as comfortable with each other as these guys after so many years. Their friendships are as strong now as they were then. It's heartwarming to see."

Dick Fisher says his three years rowing with VCU crew gave him a sense of ultimate teamwork that has carried him through his entire life—a 30-year career at Washington Gas & Electric and nine years in the Virginia House of Delegates. "All the oars had to go in at the same time and come out at the same time," he explains. "All eight rowers have to be 'clicking,' like a machine. When that happens, it's a beautiful sight."

## THE SAME RIVER TWICE

Shimchick had a wish at the reunion. "If we could get crew started again at VCU, that would be the absolute greatest thing to ever happen to this group of guys." The Greek philosopher Heraclitus said no one steps in the same river twice. He also said, "Everything flows."

In 2002, a handful of undergraduates formed the VCU Crew Club, with both men's and women's crews. On April 10, 2004, VCU Crew and The Virginia Boat Club sponsored the First Annual Rockett's Landing Regatta. Crews from VCU, William & Mary, Old Dominion, and the University of Richmond raced on the lower James River. VCU Men's Novice 4 won the sixth race, 1750 meters, beating William & Mary by a deck, with a time of 5:23.10.

After the races, the Barge Club, VCU Varsity Crew and families and friends had

a second reunion, this time a picnic with VCU Crew—the New Generation. The scrappy spirit of the rowers easily bridged three decades. As it reads on the new VCU Crew Club's website, "with spray-painted oars and mismatched uniforms, the legend continues..."

Alumni rowers and boosters can contact the current VCU Crew at [www.studentorg.vcu.edu/vcucrewclub](http://www.studentorg.vcu.edu/vcucrewclub) or [row4vcu@hotmail.com](mailto:row4vcu@hotmail.com).

*David Ready is a writer and designer in Brooklyn.*



JOE MAHONEY



ASH DANIEL, VCU CREATIVE SERVICES



ASH DANIEL, VCU CREATIVE SERVICES



# the RIGHT PERSON

BY MARY ELLEN MERCER

"He was the right person at the right time," says Roger Nicholson '68BS/H&S '97PhD/E, former president of the VCU Alumni Association. Bill Iles arrived from the University of Iowa Alumni Office in September, 1987 as executive director of Alumni Activities for VCU. A very full 16 years later, he retired in January, 2004.

Sixteen years ago, the VCU Alumni Association operated out of four small rooms at 828 West Franklin Street, with only three paid staff members and a small budget, divided among six school alumni boards on the Academic Campus. "It was like throwing a bone to hungry dogs. We all had programs we wanted to do, but there was just no money," says Nicholson. David Norris '63BS/B, then on the School of Business Alumni Board, agrees. "You had to be Solomon to apportion that."

To the frustrated boards, "Bill came with a vision of how alumni could become more self-reliant and support the University," says Nicholson. The Alumni Associations had no revenue-producing programs: no membership dues, no alumni travel program, no career program, a few licensed items, Nicholson says. Most important was



Bill Iles, director of VCU Alumni Activities, and former Alumni Association president Hugh Keogh '81MS/MC shared the efforts and the laughs.

the need to pull these programs and more together into a comprehensive strategy for building alumni ties and supporting VCU.

"You could start from the beginning and build the whole thing," Iles says gleefully. Iles' goals were "to build a sense of tradition and pride for alumni and a warm connection with VCU, to develop an alumni presence within the University and weld it together in support of a stronger VCU." Things began to happen fast.

VCU began recognizing its outstanding alumni at the Founders Day Alumni Stars program, begun in 1988. In 1989, alumni began actively serving on university search committees, recruiting students, and mentoring current students through the Extern Program. In 1989, connections with African American alumni were established with the African American Alumni Council. By 1990, both campuses had membership dues programs and the Association presidents were part of Commencement.



1988

First Founders Day and Alumni Stars, part of University's 150th Year Celebration

1989

African American Alumni Council founded

Alumni Extern Program: alumni mentoring students

Alumni Admissions Counseling Program

Student Alumni Ambassadors formed

1990

Alumni Membership Program, both campuses

Agreement between MCV Alumni Association and President Trani to exchange land and move the MCV Alumni House

First Commencement Breakfast hosted by Alumni Associations

1990s+

Alumni Connections: continual improvements to current alumni database of 120,000 graduates with 93% correct addresses

1991

VCUAA Alumni House at 310 N. Shafer Street

VCUAA 50-year Alumni Club Reunions

Parents and Partners Weekend, MCVAA

1992

Summer—Scarab redesign, 2-color

1993

MCV Alumni House opens, rebuilt and renovated with funds raised by alumni and friends

Affinity Credit Card

Alumni Neighborhood Outreach programs begin

1994

First Nursing Alumni Conference

Alumni Board Room in University Commons

## VCU-MCV ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS TIMELINE





# at the RIGHT TIME

By the time President Eugene Trani came to VCU in 1990, the alumni boards were ready to support him. "Bill played a significant role in helping put the infrastructure in place to help the University grow," says Nicholson. Peter Wyeth came to VCU as vice president of advancement in 1993. "I was struck by the amount of new activities that Bill had just gotten underway here, and I saw right away that he had a vision for the two Alumni Associations."

An active board member during the '90s, Norris remembers, "Bill got the first university-wide directory going," "as well as developing the alumni database." In 1990, the total database was slightly more than 60,000 with a high percentage of lost or incorrect addresses. The number of graduates has doubled to 120,000 with 93 percent good addresses. An important aspect of this and other projects, Norris points out, was that "Bill truly was able to step over boundaries of various schools to work with almost anyone, without isolating groups." Iles' inclusive, collaborative style emphasized "joint effort, joint credit," Norris adds.

Norris was vice president and controller of Signet Bank (now Wachovia), and worked with Bill on

VCU affinity credit card negotiations. "Bill was very astute. We came out of that meeting with an offer more than double what they started with." Not only did the Alumni Association receive \$1 million up front, to finance buying and renovating the Alumni House on Franklin Street. Iles also made sure of value for alumni, negotiating a card with a permanent low interest rate and good travel discounts.

The Alumni Board Room was set up in the University Commons in 1994, the first permanent presence on campus for alumni. **Ken Magill '65BSB '69MS/E** was alumni board treasurer and later president; he also chaired the Alumni House Committee on the Academic Campus. "We would not have had an Alumni House without Bill. He is the worker bee behind the scenes." As a leader, Magill notes, Bill is "low-key, but so organized and focused that he can guide you in the direction you need to go." Magill cites Iles' major skills in planning, organization, staffing, directing, coordination, reporting—to the university and alumni—and budgeting.

It was typical of Iles' work that the house purchase and renovations were funded by the Association through

programs like the credit card. He never forgot that the purpose of the Associations was to support current students and the University. Through a campaign centered on the house, the Association raised \$1 million toward merit scholarships, which was added to \$1 million from the VCU Foundation and \$2 million from Schools on the Academic Campus. The number of merit scholarships for VCU's brightest students leapt from 7 to 121.

Most of the work on the house was done by alumni—the contractor, interior designers, and alumni artists who contributed to the period décor. "It lives up to its name, 'Alumni House,'" Iles stresses, "because it is truly the result of alumni generosity, inspiration and art."

## OLD SCHOOL, NEW TIES

**Dr. Harry Johnson '53MD** telephoned from Columbia, South America to talk about his first meeting with Iles. "At the time there was a huge rift between everything MCV and everything VCU—and that included alumni affairs. One of the alumni officers even announced that she had no intention of taking any direction from Bill. In his usual calm way, Bill explained what he saw as the direction for overall alumni affairs. It



First issue of *Shafer Court Connections*, strictly for alumni

### 1994–95

Millennium alumni database maintains more complete connections with alumni

### 1995

First formal RPI Alumni Reunion

Alumni Website established

### 1996–99

First Alumni-led VCU Capital Campaign, Partners for Progress

### 1997

FUSA Credit Card, a multi-million dollar contract toward self-support of Associations

### 1998

Life Membership Endowments: permanent financial support for Associations

Paul A. Gross Conference Center Opens at MCV Alumni House

### 2000

Richard T. Robertson Alumni House Opens on Academic Campus

\$3.6 million VCU Alumni Merit Scholarship Fund, one third raised through gifts naming parts of the Alumni House creates 107 new scholarships

Matching Fund Incentive Program: MCVAA and MCV Foundation create \$1 million program for more than 48 new faculty chairs and student scholarships



### 2001

Winter—4-color *Shafer Court Connections*  
Spring—4-color *Scarab*

Website redesigned:  
[www.vcu-mvcalumni.org](http://www.vcu-mvcalumni.org)

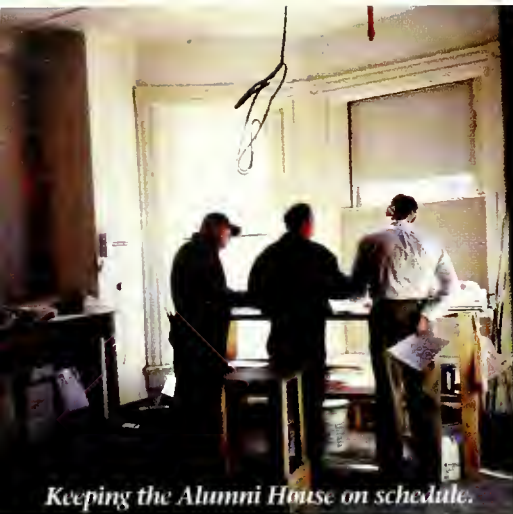
### 2003

Alumni Web Feature begun

### 2004

Alumni E-xpress, e-newsletter





*Keeping the Alumni House on schedule.*

was done in such a forceful, yet very diplomatic way that I believe all those in attendance realized that a real leader was now in charge."

**Richard Barnes '77DDS** was president of the MCV Alumni Association in 1990, three years after Iles arrived on campus. "Things were not moving well," says Barnes. The alumni office's priority in the late 1980s was building trust between medical campus alumni and the University. Key to the process was insuring the Association's long-term stability, which was centered on the house. The University needed the land on which the Association's house rested to expand the ambulatory care center, and the Association needed a new home from which it could serve alumni, students and the University. For a decade the Association and University tried to reach agreement on trading land and clearing the way for both prosper.

During the first years, Barnes says, the Association hired a new executive director of the MCV Alumni Association; put in place a new editor and redesign for *Scarab*, the alumni magazine; and changed the by-laws to involve more alumni on the Association board. And they doggedly worked through a series of obstacles to clear the way for a new Alumni House.

Bess Littlefield was the new executive director of the MCV Alumni Association. "Richard and I were very busy," she understates. "Our major objective was to expand the programs and services of the Alumni Association to reach out to a wider

alumni audience. Moving and reconstructing the house was a major part of that."

How did they do so much so fast? "It was like a logjam on a raging river," Barnes says. "You move a couple of logs, and then everything starts to move." He continues, "Bill and I worked very, very well together. We just clicked. We wanted things to happen positively for the University, and we got it done. There were no egos involved."

Iles says, "A decade of fruitless negotiation created frustration. It took alumni like Richard and **Dr. Fred Given '53MD** willing to take the first step." Given stepped forward soon after Dr. Trani arrived to sign an agreement beginning the process to trade land, move the alumni house, and make room for the new Ambulatory Care Center. "From there," Iles remembers, "it was a matter of demonstrating how valuable alumni were to the University's future and how much university growth helps alumni. Richard saw that opportunity and made the most of it."

By 1996-99, VCU asked alumni from the two campuses to chair the Partners for Progress development campaign. Previous campaigns had been led by civic and corporate leaders. Roger Nicholson remembers that it was not always easy to convince the University that alumni input and connection was crucial to VCU. "On numerous occasions Bill had to have the courage of his convictions to say things that were risky. He always bet on the values and commitment of the alumni."

## LIVE LINKS

Iles holds a PhD in history, for him definitely a live subject. Early on, large photos of both campuses in the '50s decorated his office. He spent many lunch hours poring over yearbooks and histories of both MCV and RPI. "I realized that MCV struggled for survival in the nineteenth century. Also, there were numerous unofficial connections between RPI and MCV. When MCV's president, Dr. W. T. Sanger, needed a nursing

school or occupational therapists, he'd call RPI founder and president, Henry Hibbs, who would set up a program. Medical campus students worked at all the hospitals near the RPI campus, and dated and married RPI women."

Iles' "comprehensive knowledge of the history of RPI, MCV and VCU was extremely valuable to me as an outsider," Wyeth comments. "I relied heavily on Bill's insight as to why certain things evolved as they did, and I gained an understanding of the values of this university."

**Marsha Shuler '74BS '79MA/B** was president of the VCUAA board and served on the Alumni House committee. "When Bill came in, he had an energy and an interest in connecting alumni with current areas," she says. "He was fascinated with whatever was happening at the University." Pharmacy alumna **Bertha Rolfe '47BS/P** concurs. "He was a wonderful person to work with, always very interested in everything that was going on, and most capable."

New programs brought alumni back to VCU for Reunions, like the first formal RPI Reunion in 1995. Mentoring programs like the Extern Program linked alumni with current students. *Shafer Court Connections* was created for alumni from RPI and the Academic Campus. Communications were updated to new technology at the website, [www.vcu-mcvalumni.org](http://www.vcu-mcvalumni.org); VCUAA's first e-newsletter went out this March.

**Bruce Twyman '74BS/MC** first president of the African American Alumni Council, recalls, "Bill and the Alumni Activities staff were instrumental in establishing the Council. His encouragement in what we were trying to do energized me, and made me feel connected to VCU." Those ties are now so strong that 300-400 alumni come back for Reunion every spring. The Council has created a scholarship and mentoring activities for African American students.

Ken Magill mentions Iles' "team-building skills," evident with both alumni boards and with his staff. Iles

*(Continued on page 40)*





\*Member of the VCU Alumni Association

## 1960s

**R. Edward Brown '64BS/B** is director of financial services for the County of Gloucester, VA. • **\*Harriet Cooley '66BFA** is executive director of the National Towing & Recovery Association of America. • **Wilbur Ellis '68BS/B** is a sales representative for the Control Corporation of America. • **\*Edward Flippen '65BS/B** is a partner with McGuireWoods LLP and was named to the Board of Trustees for VCU's Inger and Walter Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences. • **\*Steven Green '69BS/B** is a financial systems director at Miller Brewing Company in Milwaukee. He lives in Waukesha, WI. • **\*Stuart Goldman '66BS/B** is a managing partner for Betz & Goldman LLP CPAs in Silver Spring, MD. • **Frank Lansinger '68BS/B** is a principal for Lansinger-Craddock Architectural Partners. • **Walter McGhee '64BFA** owns McGhee Fundraising Consultants, Inc. in Toledo. He is currently president of the Toledo Rotary Club. He lives in Maumee, OH. • **\*Howard Minor '69BS/B** is president of Minor Financial Strategies in Richmond. • **Thomas O'Brien '68BS/B** is a drafting/GIS supervisor for Henrico County, VA. • **Norman Olshansky '69BSW** is president of NFP Consulting Resources, Inc. in Sarasota, FL. • **\*Dr. Dennis O'Toole '68MS/B**, a VCU economics professor, received the Kenneth G. Elzinga Distinguished Teaching Award from the Southern Economics Association. • **\*Carolyn Prescott '69BS/E** is owner and president of Lifelines, Inc., a writing and publishing business in White Stone, VA. • **\*John Schwartz '69BS/A** is a managing director in the Real Estate division of Have Site Will Travel, Ltd. • **Dr. Wayne Talley '68MS/B** was appointed the executive director of International Maritime Ports and Logistics Institute at Old Dominion University. He is also the editor-in-chief of *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*. • **Teresa Wickham '69BS/B** is a training specialist for SunTrust Bank.

## 1970s

**David Allen '74BS/MC** is the business editor for the *Star-Ledger* in Newark, NJ. • **\*John Allen '79MS/B** is the IT auditor for

the City of Richmond. • **Steve Atkinson '75BS/B '77MS** is director of human resources for Philip Morris. • **James Babnew '75BFA** owns an insurance company in Marmora, NJ. • **\*Kathleen Barrett '71BS '73MS/B** is the vice president of the American Red Cross in Richmond. • **Robert Belcher '71MBA** is president of Contract Interior Services, Inc. in Florida. • **Norman Blalock Jr '70AS/En** is a senior electrical engineer for Sierra Lobo, Inc. at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. • **Geoffrey Byrd '71BS/H&S '76MS/AH** is a mental health counselor with Counseling Associates, PC in Winchester, VA. • **\*John Carter Jr. '72BFA** is president of Carter Communications in Thomasville, NC. • **\*Robert Carter '74MEd** is principal of Capon Bridge Elementary School in Capon Bridge, WV. • **\*David Clements '70BS/MC** married Catherine Kalser on October 19, 2002. He owns DWC Photography, and manages C&W singer Kevin Black. • **Rowland Creamer '77BFA** is a maintenance assistant for BB&T in Richmond. • **\*Randall Edwards '79BS/HS** married Terri Lupien on November 20, 2003. They live in Midlothian, VA. • **Karen Eide '77BFA** owns Graphic Design and Advertising in Carrollton, VA. • **\*J. Michael Everett '74BS/B** is chair/CEO of Thompson Everett Inc. in Glen Allen, VA. • **Larry Fentriss '79MBA** is president of Anderson & Strudwick Investment Corporation. • **Marjory Franklin '76BSW** is a school psychologist for Arlington, VA Public Schools. • **\*Carmen Foster '74BS/MC**, executive director of the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute at VCU, was a Richmond YWCA Woman of the Year in Education. She was a Kellogg National Leadership Fellow and executive director of the Master's in Leadership Studies at the University of Richmond. • **Jayne Gackenbach '76MS '78PhD/H&S** is an instructor of psychology and sociology at Grant MacEwan College. • **\*Cynthia Gadberry '74BSW '76MSW** is senior vice president and director of commercial banking for Sovereign Bank in Boston. • **\*George Gibbs Jr. '75BS/B** is CFO for the Commonwealth of Virginia in Richmond. • **Barbara Gibson '72BS/MC** is an associate director of the Virginia Literacy Institute. • **\*Nancy Gifford '72BFA** is director of Corporate & Foundation Relations for Institutional Advancement at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, NY. • **\*Daniel Gill '72BS/B** is the vice president/principal of Dayvon Services, Inc. in Burke, VA, where he lives. • **\*Larry Greene '74BS/B** is treasurer of American Legion Boys State of Virginia, and is also on the Bay Trust Company Board of Directors. • **John Gould**

**'75BS/H&S** was elected to the Hopewell/Prince George Chamber of Commerce and is an attorney with Marks & Harrison in Richmond. • **Gail Harding '73BFA** is the president/publisher of *The Enterprise* in Stuart, VA. • **Craig Hartley '72MS/H&S** is a human factors engineering architect for Sun Microsystems in Menlo Park, CA. • **\*Lindsay Harrington '73BS/B** is a realtor for Coldwell Banker NRT in Punta Gorda, FL. She is in her fourth term in the Florida House in District #72, Southwest Florida, where she is also the speaker pro tempore. • **\*Stephanie Holt '74BS/B** is an account manager for Xerox Corporation in Richmond. • **Inge Horowitz '71MEd** co-authored a book titled *Understanding Learning Disabilities: A Parent Guide and Workbook*. • **\*Dennis Hughes '75BS/B '79MPA/H&S** is a health services director in West Palm Beach, FL. • **Nancy Mathieson-Jeffers '76BS/E** is a team leader for Camden National Corporation for the IT division in Rockport, ME. • **Matthew Kenny III '76BS/H&S** is a semiconductor engineering manager with Philips Electronics in Sunnyvale, CA. • **\*Kenneth Kirby '70BS/B** is owner of Kenneth W. Kirby, CPA in Easton, MD. • **Jody Korman '79BS/B** was awarded the Century 21 Ruby Award in 2003 Real Estate Sales. • **Elizabeth Kornbluth '78BFA** is head designer in the Boys Department of Longstreet INDS in New York City. • **Lewis Lehman '73BS/B** is human resources manager for Novo Nordisk in Montes Claros, Brazil. • **Pamela Lewis '73BFA** is a voice-over actor with Freelance of NYC and wrote *Talking Funny for Money: An Introduction to the Cartoon/Character/Looping Area of Voice-Overs*. She is the voice of Chubb Insurance on *Antiques Roadshow* on PBS. • **\*Edward Livesay '78BS/B** is owner and broker of Greystarr Properties, LLC in Colorado. • **\*John MacLellan '73BFA** owns John MacLellan Photos & Design in Richmond. • **Michael Mays '72BS/B** owns the Law Office of Michael A. Mays in Fairfax, VA. • **Jim McNeal '77MS/H&S** owns the Dive Shop in Richmond. • **Thomas Mercer '79BS/H&S** is director of Retail Operations for Kingsdown, Inc. in Mebane, NC. • **Douglas Meredith '75BA/H&S** is director of economic development in Gloucester County, VA. • **Karen Millnick '77BFA** is director of Workshops and On-Going Programs for Sevenoaks Pathwork Center. • **Wendy Mitchell '75BS/H&S** works for the VA Department of Agriculture. • **Cheryl Moody '75BSW '79MSW** is the director of Field Education in the School of Social Work at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. • **Robert Morrow '75BS/MC** is CEO



# Calendar 2004-05

## VCU Alumni Association

SEPTEMBER 16

Faculty Convocation  
VCUAA Board Meeting

NOVEMBER 22-30

Italy—the Cultural Season  
Alumni Campus Abroad

DECEMBER 11

WINTER COMMENCEMENT 2004  
Commencement Breakfast

JANUARY 3-18

Alumni Extern Program

JANUARY

VCUAA Board Meeting

FEBRUARY

Homecoming

MARCH 14-18

Alumni Extern Program

MARCH 28

Prospective Student Calling Program

APRIL

Destination Imagination

APRIL 29-MAY 1

AAAC REUNION 2005

MAY 22

COMMENCEMENT  
Commencement Breakfast

of eSchool News in Bethesda, MD. • **\*Thomas Mountcastle '75BS/B** is president of James River Technical, Inc. • **Carolyn Norton '78BFA** owns Carolyn McIntyre Norton Design & Illustration in New Concord, OH. • **A. Thomas Park '75BS/B** is the deputy chief financial officer for the U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington, DC. • **Macon Pegram '74BS/B** is an associate pastor at the Manassas Baptist Church in Manassas, VA. • **Diane Perkins '74BS '76MS/B** is a senior purchasing systems analyst for Philip Morris, USA in Richmond. • **Mary Peters '70BS/MC** owns Lifewishes Publishing in Pasadena, CA. • **Thomas Peters '78BS/A** is president of Computer Aided Design Firm in Richmond. • **Baxter Phillips '75BS/B '76MBA** is the senior vice president and CFO of Massey Energy Company. • **James Polley '76BS/B** is president of James E. Polley, CPA in Pikeville, KY, where he lives. • **Willis Pope '78BS/B** is director of the Real Property Department for Henrico County, VA. • **Susan Reed '72BS/H&S** works for the State of VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. • **\*Deborah Richardson '73BS/H&S** is a pro-

fessor and chair of psychology at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA, where she lives. • **\*Doug Riddell '73BS/MC** wrote the forward to Kalmbach Publishing's book *The Faces of Railroad*. He is an Amtrak engineer and was a guest on the national radio show, *Voices of America*, in April, 2004. • **\*Sandra Riddell '75BS/E '79MED** has been a teacher for more than 28 years and a library information specialist in Henrico County Public Schools. She was selected as the planning librarian to open her second library in Greenwood Elementary of Henrico, VA. She is a member of Nickelodeon's National Educator Advisory Panel and writes monthly lesson plans for Nickelodeon's NICK NEWS. • **\*Darlene Rodgers '71BFA** is a technical instructor for the VCU Health System in the information systems division. She is also a training and education project leader for Health Informatics Inc. in Richmond. • **John Sands '69BS/B '73MS/B** is an entrepreneurial studies program lecturer at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA. • **Dr. Carol Jambor-Smith '75BA '77MA/H&S** is director of External Relations at the University of Notre Dame Law School. • **\*Steven Suessmann '75BFA** teaches art and chairs the art department at Greensville County High School in Emporia, VA. • **\*Guy Thrift '71BS/B** is president of Minuteman Press in Alexandria, VA. • **\*Maurice Tinsley '78BS/H&S** is supervisor of the QVC Inc. Chesapeake, VA call center. • **Arild Trent '77BS/B** is director of Investor Relations for Virginia Community Development Corporation in Richmond. • **\*Kenneth Tuttle '78BS/H&S** is the aviation group supervisor for the Air and Marine Interdiction Division of the U.S. Customs Service in Tucson. • **Bruce Twyman '74BS/MC** is director of public information and development for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice in Richmond, where he lives. • **Valerie Warner '75BS/E** is a grant writer in Seat Pleasant, MD. • **\*L. Thomas Winfree Jr '74MS/H&S** is a professor of criminal justice at New Mexico State University. He received the 2003 Dennis W. Darnall Faculty Achievement Award. • **David Yu '74BS/B** chairs the board of Summit National Bank in Atlanta.

## 1980s

**Valerie Adkins '85BS/B** is a senior advanced technology analyst for the Virginia Community College System. • **Hal Allen '83BS/B** is a branch manager for Sales in Lanham, MD. • **\*Henry Allen '85BS/H&S** is president of Todd Allen, D.D.S., P.A., in Leonardtown, MD. • **Cindy Andrews '78BS/H&S '80MS/AH** is executive director of VCU Human Resources. • **\*P. Alan Armentrout '82BS/B** is director of information technology at Anchor

Pharmacies, Inc in Hampstead, MD. He lives in Mechanicsville, VA. • **Suzanne Barr '85BS/B** owns Azure Sky Resources in Thousand Oaks, CA. • **Pam (Weller) Barton '80BME '80MMB** is the coordinator for the Specialty Center for Arts Programs at Thomas Dale High School in Chesterfield County, VA. She lives with her husband, **Steve Barton '83MM** in Midlothian, VA. • **John Beard '85BS/E** is a guidance counselor with the Montgomery Public Schools in North Carolina. • **Cheryl Black '86MS/H&S** teaches biology at Aiken Technical College. • **Keith Boswell '83BS/B** is a senior manager for the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. • **\*Christa Kirchschlager-Britell '88BS/H&S** gave birth to twins, Hunter and Rebecca, on October 26, 2001. • **Dean Brown '87BS/B** was promoted to chief information officer at AmeriFee in Southborough, MA. • **\*Larry Buckman '87BS/H&S** is owner and president of Residential Properties Investment Company. • **Rick Bukoskey '87BFA** is a senior designer with McClung Companies in Waynesboro, VA. • **Lee Bundy '88BA/H&S** is vice president of sales for NSL Sales, Inc. in Richmond. • **Kenneth Cahoon '84BFA** is a video technician in Forlì, Italy. • **David Callahan '89BFA** is an assistant architect for the city of Newport News, VA. • **Nicholas Canderelli '87BS/B** is an account manager for General Electric Company in Richmond. • **Sharon Capra '89BS/B** is an Air Force Personnel Center program specialist for the U.S. Department of Defense in San Antonio, TX. • **Robin Carter '87BS/E** is the Pulley Career Center department chair for Fairfax County, VA Public Schools. • **\*R. Scott Carter '86BS/H&S** is a patrol sergeant for Hanover County, VA Sheriff's Office. • **Keven La Verdad Casey '89BS/MC** is the news and sports director for Cumulus Broadcasting's Wilmington, NC cluster. He is also a regional reporter for various other sports broadcast centers. • **Eric Cipriano '84MSW** is the chief of Social Work Service in the Department of Mental Health at William Beaumont Army Medical Center in Texas. • **Kenneth Clark '81BS/H&S** is a terrorism training manager for the VA Department of Emergency Management. He lives in Henrico County, VA, with his wife Joanne and their children Sophia and Ethan. • **Claire A. Collins '84MPA/H&S** is a county administrator for the County of Bath. She was appointed by Governor Warner in November to a task force of three to assess state and local government response to Hurricane Isabel. She lives in Hot Springs, VA. • **Elizabeth Crawford '88BS/H&S** is a preservation planner at the Bureau of Historic Preservation in Tallahassee, FL. • **William Daggett III '87BS/B** is an employee benefit consultant with Kistler-Tiffany Benefits in Wayne, PA. He is also co-owner of The Jones Group. • **Christina Day**



'86BS/B is a database administrator for Hunton & Williams in Richmond. • **Justin Deister** '86MFA owns Self-Uppercase Design in Louisville, CO. • **\*Collins Denny IV** '87BS/B launched Access Business in Richmond. • **Donald DiLoreto** '83BA/H&S is vice president of Wachovia Bank in Philadelphia. • **William Driver** '87BFA is an emergency management officer for the Tarrant County Fire Marshal's Office in Fort Worth, TX. • **Calvin Duncan** '88BS/H&S coaches the Heritage Christian basketball program. • **\*Eleanor Ruma** '88BS/B is a senior contract administrator with the City of Alexandria, VA. • **Robert Forkins** '83MBA is an associate principal engineer for Philip Morris, USA in Richmond. • **Janett Forte** '87BS/H&S '92MSW is Richmond YWCA Woman of the Year in Government and Politics, chosen for her work to create safer homes and communities, especially in setting up a model of coordinated community response to domestic violence in Chesterfield County. Forte is executive director of VCU's National Center of Excellence in Women's Health and board president for Virginians Against Domestic Violence. • **Christy Frederick** '83BFA won a \$10,000 grant to study the impact of fashion on the culture and customs of Titustown from 1901 through the early 1970s. • **Joseph Fridley** '81BA/H&S is the Supreme Court of Virginia's training manager for its Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission. • **Michael Fuller** '81BS/B is vice president of IBM in Coral Gables, FL. • **Catherine Fust** '86BS/H&S is a juvenile probation officer for the Clayton Co. Juvenile Court in Jonesboro, GA. • **Bella (Karr) Gerlich** '85BFA and **Grant Gerlich** '85/H&S appeared on TLC's design show *Trading Spaces* last September. Grant is curator at Pittsburgh's Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum Trust; Bella is head of Art and Special Collections at Carnegie Mellon University library and working toward a PhD in Library Science at the University of Pittsburgh. • **\*Adrienne Gilliam** '84MSW is chief probation and parole officer for the VA Department of Corrections. • **\*Georgette Glen** '84BS/B is a loan consultant for Washington Mutual in Princeton, NJ. She lives in Cranbury, NJ. • **\*Eugene Grecheck** '82MBA is vice president of Nuclear Support Services for Dominion Energy, Inc. in Glen Allen, VA. • **Timothy Grollimund** '82MA/B is owner and president of Apex Global Solutions LLC in Midlothian, VA. • **Mark Hansen** '84BS/MC is the senior vice president of TheraCom in Bethesda, MD. • **Darlene Harris** '86BSW '87MSW is the commander of U.S. Public Health Service in Springfield, MO. • **\*Joe Hart** '81BS/B is a field sales analyst for RJReynolds

Tobacco Company. He lives in Pocono Pines, PA. • **Val Haskins** '80BS/H&S is in medical sales at Merck. • **David Hatch** '85BS/B is a senior internal auditor with Anthem Insurance Company. He lives in Chester, VA. • **Troy Hedblom** '88BS/B married Jacqueline Cook on August 3, 2002. • **Thomas Hilterbrant** '83MFA teaches at The Collegiate School in Richmond. • **Sharon Hoang** '86BS/H&S is a laboratory manager in the Department of Gastroenterology at UVA. • **Dr. David Hofheimer** '82BS/H&S '85BS/E is a chiropractor in Benicia, CA. • **\*Stephen Holloran** '80BFA is the payroll production quality assurance analyst for Automatic Data Processing in Alpharetta, GA. • **Virginia Holman** '88BA/H&S published a memoir of her mother's untreated schizophrenia titled *Rescuing Patty Hearst*. She won Outstanding Literature Award of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill and a Pushcart Prize in nonfiction. • **John Hoppenhaler** '88MFA wrote a book of poetry titled *Lives of Water*. He is also a personal assistant to Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison and poetry editor of *Kestrel*. • **Michael Huffner** '89BS/B is manager of Environmental Health and Services for Nabisco. • **Scott Hull** '87BS/H&S works for the U.S. Government in information systems and is chief of the Network Engineering Branch. • **Atul Jain** '86BS/H&S is president of Dynamic Systems Technology, Inc. • **\*Thomas Jamerson** '88BS/B is a general litigation lawyer for Phelps Dunbar, LLP in Jackson, MS. • **Carole Jennings** '83BS/E is principal of Thunder Ridge High School in Highlands Ranch, CO. • **William Johnson** '83BFA teaches art for Richmond Public Schools. • **Henry Jones** '84BS/B is vice president of First Virginia/BB&T in Falls Church, VA. • **Jeffrey Jones** '81BS/H&S works for Kraft Foods Global, Inc. as the senior manager of Facility and Fleet services in the DSD Company division, East Hanover, NJ. • **\*Richard Koch** '80BS/B is a systems analyst with UnumProvident Corporation. • **John Koehler** '80BFA is president of Koehler Studios, Inc. in Virginia Beach. • **Tom Landers** '87BS/B is president of the Virginia School of Sailing in Richmond. He was awarded Instructor of the Year on February 12, 2004 by the American Sailing Association and the school awarded School of the Year. • **R. Steven Landes** '83BS/MC is majority caucus chair for Virginia House of Delegates, serving his fifth term representing the 25th House District. He also serves on House Education, Appropriations, Health, Welfare and Institutions Committees. He is the executive director of NewBiz Virginia in Verona, VA, and lives in Weyers Cave, VA. • **Kirk Laughlin** '87BS/MC is the executive editor for *America's Network Magazine*. • **John Lawson** '87MA/H&S is vice president of

Pennsylvania Communication Association. • **William Lipscomb** '80MBA founded the architectural firm of Acanthus Architecture & Design. • **Dr. John Mason** '78BA/H&S '84MED is a clinical psychologist for Hampton-Newport News CSB. • **Steven McKinley** '85MBA is senior vice president of BB&T Capital Markets in Richmond. • **Michael McOsker** '80MS/MC is an associate broker with Thalimer/Cushman & Wakefield in the Virginia Beach office. • **Linda Meyerhoffer** '81BS/B owns Benefit Solutions, Inc. in Midlothian, VA, where she lives. • **\*Cecil Millner** '78BS '82MACC/B is a senior transfer price analyst for the Ethyl Corporation in Richmond. • **Lawrence Mink** '83BS/H&S is a section manager of the Analytical and Computational Technology Center at Rohm and Haas Company in Pennsylvania. • **Charles Moss** '87BS/H&S is a communication specialist for AT&T in Oakton, VA. • **\*Ellen Motley** '86BS/MC is a librarian for the Washington Information Group in Arlington, VA. • **\*Thomas Mountcastle** '75AS '80BS/B is chair of the board of Leadership Metro Richmond. • **M. Myers Mutch** '81BFA is president of Gracie Street Interior Design, Inc. in West Palm Beach, FL. • **George Nairn** '89BS/H&S owns Capital Investigation & Enforcement Services of Virginia. • **Victor Newman** '88BFA is creative director for Freestyle Collective in NYC. • **Peter O'Neill** '80BA/H&S is a senior campaign communications specialist in Public Relations for the Service Employees International Union. • **Victor Overby** '82BS/B is vice president of information services for Davenport & Company in Richmond. • **Don Owen** '84BS/B is the senior quality control consultant for Fannie Mae in Washington, DC. • **Richard Pearson** '84BS/B is a financial planner in Carlsbad, CA. • **Brent Penny** '86BS/B is an internal review officer for the US Army in



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Italy as part of the Joint Command South division. • **Julie Peters '87BS/B** is a medical management consultant for Highmark Blue Shield Insurance in Camp Hill, PA. • **Vicki Phillos '85BS/H&S** is a technical & customer service manager for Dynal Biotech, Inc. in Lake Success, NY. • **Peter Phipps '82BSW** is an assistant professor at Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie, NY. • **Todd Pilot '85BS/H&S** is an attorney for Tmlnstitute, LLC in Alexandria, VA. • **Emily Porter '87BA/H&S** is vice president of marketing for World Access Communications in Richmond. • **Thomas Prothro '84BFA** is a visual information specialist for the Army at Fort Bragg in the ITBC-Graphics Office. • **Samuel Purvis '89MFA** is project manager for Browning Moore Associates in Rutland, VT. • **Dr. Dean Reardon '82BS '85MS/H&S** is an assistant professor of pharmacology at University of Louisiana at Monroe. • **Cassandra Reynolds '85BS/B** is an administrative coordinator for Hutton & Williams Church Hill Office in Richmond. • **Dr. Woo Rho '86BS '87MS/H&S** is an associate professor of computer science at Bucheon College in Bucheon, South Korea. • **Scott Richards '89BS/B** is regional sales manager in the Gypsum Products division of Georgia-Pacific Corporation. • **Robert Riddle '84BFA** works for the Library of Congress as a senior designer in the Facilities Design and Construction Department. • **John Rives '86BS/MC** is a publisher for Comprint Military Publications in Gaithersburg, MD. • **Edgar Roca '88BA/H&S** teaches Spanish at Valley Regional High School in Deep River, CT. • **Debra Ropelewski '88MBA** is assistant dean of finance at VCU. • **Daniel Rudge '88MURP/H&S** is executive director of Ozarks Transportation Organization in Springfield, MD. • **Christopher Russel '83BFA** is a psychotherapist in New York City, where he lives. • **Julia Sautter '85BS/B** is the private banking and trust product manager for SEI Investments in Oaks, PA. • **Craig Scott '89BS/B** is a partner with the Law Offices of Scott & Guy P.A. in North Miami Beach, FL, where he lives. • **Dwayne Smith '85BS/MC** is a research associate for Policy Studies Associates in the Education division in Washington, DC. • **Joseph Solari '88MBA** is senior vice president of Houlihan Lokey Howard & Zukin Investment Banking Services in Chicago. • **William Springer '87BS/B** is a business banking officer. • **Claude Stevens '81MBA** is a management analyst for Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority in Richmond. • **Ike Stoneberger '86MFA** teaches at Loudoun Valley High School in Purcellville, VA. • **George Swenck '80C/B** is a self-employed accountant in Midlothian, VA. • **Darlene Tate '88BSW** works in sales & marketing for Verizon Wireless. • **Jody Teitelman '78MS '83PhD/H&S '83C/AH** is an associate professor of occupational therapy at VCU's

School of Allied Health Professions. • **Susan Turner '81BFA** is the onsite coordinator for American Express One in Richmond. • **Felicia Tyler '83BS/H&S** is manager of the South-Eastern Family Project in Newport News, VA. • **Michael Ventrella '81BA/H&S** is an attorney with Zito, Martino & Karasek in Brodheads ville, PA. • **Steven VonCanon '83MBA** is the director of financial management for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. • **Joseph Walsh '70BS/E '82MBA** is CIO of DeLeeuw Associates, Inc./CSI in Gainesville, GA. • **Kathryn Weathington '83BS/H&S** is a data analyst for Verispan LLC in Yardley, PA. • **Phyllis (Dyer) Weldon '77BFA '83C/B** is CEO of Eolus, Inc. She lives with her two daughters in Raleigh, NC. • **Carolyn Wells '85BFA** is the production coordinator of Creative Services at VCU. • **Stephen Wetta '89BA/H&S** is an adjunct professor for Hunter College and NYU. • **Herman Williams III '81BS/H&S** is a colonel and student at the US Army War College in Carlisle, PA. • **Michelle Woodhouse '89BS/E** is director of academic affairs at Norfolk State University in Virginia Beach, VA. • **Peter Zucker '81MS '84PhD/H&S** co-owns Stars Behavioral Health Group in Oakland, CA. He lives in Manhattan Beach, CA.

## 1990s

**Iman Abdussabur '96BS/H&S** is a consultant at Robert Half Technology. She lives in Richmond. • **Michael Alao '99BS/B** is a senior associate for Pricewaterhouse Coopers LLP in the Assurance-Internal Audit Services division in Tyson's Corner, VA. • **Zaccariah Allen '99BS/B** is a web development manager at American Specialty Health in San Diego. • **Lynn Anderson '99MSW** is a social work supervisor for the Richmond Department of Social Services. • **Rebecca Askew '94MPA/H&S** is a policy analyst for the Virginia Department of Agriculture in Richmond. • **Anne Atkinson '75MSW '95PhD/E** is president of PolicyWorks, Ltd. in Richmond. • **Donnie Aton '99MAE** is an aesthetic educator for the Montgomery County Public Schools in Germantown, MD. • **Stephanie Ayers '96MURP/H&S** is a marketing planner at Northrop Grumman in the Civil Systems division. • **Judy Baker '92BS/B** is manager of financial reporting for Sarasota Memorial Healthcare System, Inc. in Sarasota, FL. • **Jacquelyn Barnes '99BS/H&S** teaches in Hanover County Public Schools. • **Stefan Bauer '92BS/B** is a senior programmer analyst for First North American National Bank in Richmond. • **Kent Bausman '94MS/H&S** is an assistant professor of sociology in Saint Louis, MO. • **Matthew Bellingham '91BFA** owns Duo Art & Design in Portland, OR. • **Melissa Berling '97BA/H&S** is a sales representative for Augie Lange Realty in Richmond. • **Stephanie Berry '93BS/H&S** is a paralegal

for Miller & Associates in Alexandria, VA, where she lives. • **Mark Bittner '92MURP/H&S** married Jennifer Roberts on August 23, 2003. • **Jevaunda Bond '94BS/MC** is a technical director for KVBC-TV Channel 3 in Las Vegas. • **Jay Boucher '92BFA** is the senior designer for MTV.com. He lives in Hoboken, NJ. • **Stacey Brann '94BS/MC** is the assistant director of athletics and media relations for Long Island University in Brooklyn. • **Claudia Brookman '93BA/H&S '93MT** is director of research and administrative services in the Advancement Office of Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, VA. • **Erin Brophy '99BS/MC** is a creative associate for National Media Inc. in Alexandria, VA, where she lives. • **Carl Brown '98C/B** is a system analyst for the International Mission Board in Richmond. • **Chris Burger '94BS/B** is a marketing analyst for Luck Stone in Richmond. • **Marshall Burke '99MBA** is with Cushman & Wakefield's Financial Services Group in Washington, D.C. • **Elizabeth Burroway '93BS/B** is the senior associate director of special events for the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. • **Dr. Nimit Chomnawang '99MS/En** is an assistant professor in the School of Electrical Engineering at Suranaree University of Technology in Thailand. • **Barameth Choochan '99BS/H&S** is a security engineer for Neustar in Sterling, VA. • **Elizabeth Cloe '92BFA** married Eamon Shanahan on August 16, 2003. She works at Deutsche Bank. • **William Commander '98BS/B** is the senior systems administrator for Circuit City in Richmond. • **Gregory Cooper '99MSW** is assistant director of the Health Professions Preparation Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. • **Gabriel Corbett '95BS/B** is a realtor for Long & Foster Realtors in Richmond. • **Mark Creasy '91BA/H&S** is an operations system trainer for Technology Training Associates in Tampa, FL. • **Scott Cuervo '90BFA** is a pre-press designer for Uptown Color in Richmond. • **George Daly '95PhD/H&S** is president of DalyWeb in Nanuet, NY. • **Terrence Daniels '94BGS/H&S** is a co-pilot for Air Net in Philadelphia. • **Ruba Darwaza '95BFA** married Matthew Borgard on August 23, 2003. • **Robert Dickerson '90BS/B** is manager of human resource business intelligence for Dominion Resources, Inc. in Richmond. • **Heather Dillon '96BFA** is an elementary art educator for Richmond Public Schools. • **Bobby Dizon '94BS/H&S** is an analyst for Accenture in Reston, VA. He lives in Burke, VA. • **Michelle Dodson '98BS/H&S** is a PROMIS technician for Infineon Technologies of Sandston, VA. • **Robert Dry Jr '76BS/H&S '97C/B** is a systems development manager for the Department of Environmental Quality in Richmond. • **Pat Dungan '95BFA** is CEO of Quaker Swamp Farm in Suffolk, VA. • **Samuel**



# Bilingual Medicine

BY ELIZABETH McDADDE '93MFA/H&S

When Dr. Betsy Singh '69BS '73MS '88PhD/H&S finished her VCU doctorate in experimental psychology, she didn't realize she was heading into a career as a translator, although with bachelor's and master's degrees in sociology as well, she crosses borders easily. As Dean of Research at Southern California University of Health Sciences, Singh helps Western physicians "translate" successful traditional medical practices into Western therapeutic protocols.

"I have to be bilingual," she says. "I have an excellent science underpinning and research design from my study at VCU, especially from Dr. J.S. Williams, former head of the Survey Research Laboratory in sociology, and Dr. Bob Hamm, who was head of Experimental Psychology in the 1980s. I use that training to 'speak the language' of a clinical scientist to Western physicians about traditional modes of therapy."

Unlike drug interventions, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) modalities have been in use for thousands of years. Singh explains, "It is important to value the empirical success of these therapies, to recognize that written documentation of these therapies goes back 5000 years. On the other hand, clinical trials conducted in a reductionist way may communicate better to the Western trained scientist or physician. So we do clinical controlled trials while continuing patient treatment—as opposed to a conventional drug model where testing must be completed before the public is exposed to the drug. Each year, more evidence convincing to Western-trained physicians is collected, giving patients and physicians more options to maximize patient recovery."

Singh's work in CAM took off through research on chronic pain. She was director of a Survey Research Unit and later a Clinical Research Unit at the University of Maryland. She was the first director of Research in CAM at UM, where the program secured millions of dollars in funding from NIH, private foundations and the University.

One study was a two-month intervention with 60 patients suffering from osteoarthritis, chronic back pain, and fibromyalgia. Fibromyalgia is a chronic debilitating musculoskeletal disorder with a high degree of pain, significant mood alteration, and high disability rates. "These people came to us because Western science had failed them," she says. "They'd already done physical therapy, they'd taken pain medications and muscle relaxers; and they were in worse shape than when they'd entered the system. Some of them were using walkers and barely mobile."

Researchers met with patients once a week for two and half hours, in a multi-component intervention. Patients were educated about fibromyalgia and their body function, particularly in terms of pain and response to it. Through cognitive behavioral therapy, a psychological technique, they changed their responses to people and situations and faced daily problems more effectively. With reasonable expectations, patients could feel successful, not anxious that they "never measured up." The third component was mindfulness meditation, which helped them stay focused in the moment to manage stress and pain. They regained flexibility and range of motion with qi gong, a very gentle moving meditation and breath awareness that embodies the precept, "You cannot fail." Qi gong encouraged people who hardly moved because of pain to indeed exercise.

"Not only did people get better, they got better in droves! The astonishing thing about our mind-body intervention was that not only did patients improve, but after the intervention was

completed, they continued to improve," says Singh. "They took their medicine with them in their heads. They had brought about a lifestyle change that markedly improved their health." UM has continued this work.

In a recent eight-week study using acupuncture to treat fibromyalgia, Singh found amazing results, to be presented soon. In her work with osteoarthritis, Singh has found traditional Ayurvedic pharmacopeia herbals which have produced striking recovery in patients about to undergo knee replacement surgery. These results have also been published.

"In the early trials of CAM, scientists failed to pair up with alternative practitioners to design an effective trial," Singh explains. "Practitioners understand the context of the therapy. Scientists understand the measurement. If we're ever going to get an allopathic (conventional) physician to 'get' this, we need to speak in their language."

It would be difficult to disregard evidence from someone with Singh's credentials. Firmly planted in both worlds, she is on the scientific review committee for the NIH-funded Consortium Center for Chiropractic Research as well as the Homeopathic Pharmacopeia of the U.S., an oversight committee for Homeopathy. She was an editor for *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* from 1998–03. She is a methodologist or co-primary investigator on several projects investigating complementary and conventional treatments for musculoskeletal disorders. In 2002 and 2003, Singh won the Research Excellence Award from SCU, and in 2002 the prestigious 'Blood of the Turnip' award.

"Somehow, we have to communicate CAM's empirical success so that Western physicians will understand, value and use what is the best choice for the patient," says Singh. "The Ayurvedic and Chinese practitioners in University clinics where I have worked are all respected physicians in their own countries. They have the right to order MRIs and diagnostic tests in India and China. But when they get off the plane in the U.S., their medicine is suspect."

Although California is open to CAM, "the East Coast has just a small core of CAM practitioners." That may be changing. When Singh gave a Research Methods workshop recently for Conemaugh Health Systems at the Murtha Neuroscience Center in Pennsylvania, the chair of neurology at the University of North Carolina attended along with other M.D.s in the Conemaugh system. M.D.s interested in CAM research came from as far away as Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Sometimes Singh can make her point less formally. After her former husband had extensive oral surgery, his surgeon handed him a pain prescription with "enough codeine to drop a horse." Singh took him directly from surgery to an experienced acupuncturist in the hospital. When the surgeon called later, he learned that his patient had taken two regular Tylenol and gone to a meeting. "I've never heard of anything like this before," he said, a little breathless. "Well, now you have," Singh replied with great satisfaction.

*Elizabeth McDade is a freelance communications specialist who lives in Ashland, Virginia.*





**Dunn '93BS/H&S** is a pretrial services officer with the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency. He lives in Richmond. • **Nelson Eby '98BS/H&S** is a computer specialist for the Department of Justice. • **Angela Edwards '93BS/H&S** is an information systems project manager for Cadmus. • **\*Karen Eldridge '93BS/MC** is a communications officer for Henrico County Police in Richmond. • **Amy Emmel '93BS/H&S** is the registered nurse executive for Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, FL. • **Leslie (Compton) Engott '93BA/AS** married Raymond Engott on October 25, 2003. They live in Henrico County, VA. • **Michael Fanguy '93BS/H&S** is a lead reactor engineer for Dominion VA power in Surry, VA. • **Kim Faulconer '95BS/B** is the senior billing auditor for Hilldrup Moving and Storage in Stafford, VA. • **Jonathan Fish '93BS/B** is the commercial director of Intelligent Sensors PLC. He lives in London. • **Kelly Filizola '93BS/B** had her first child, Madeleine Amanda Filizola, on November 10, 2003. • **Robert Fitzgerald '93BS/H&S** is a sales representative for Dell Inc. in Round Rock, TX. • **Dawn Freck '93BS/B** is the payroll supervisor for Trader Publishing Company. • **Stacey Fredericks '94BA/H&S** is owner of Landmark Legends in Fort Myers, FL. • **\*Ann Ford '97BFA** is director of creative and prepress services for Choice Communications, Inc. in Richmond. • **Lauren Ford '97BFA** is an end user services site analyst for Capital One in Richmond. • **Barbara Fornoff '90MSW** is a self-employed licensed clinical social worker. • **Janett Forte '87BS/H&S '92MSW** is coordinator for the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health at VCU—one of 19 in the nation. The YWCA of Greater Richmond named her 2004 Outstanding Woman in Government and Politics. She is a licensed clinical social worker and a crisis counselor/clinician. She is board president for Virginians Against Domestic Violence; a member of Attorney General's Advisory Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; and a consultant for the International Association of Chiefs of Police. • **Margaret Foughner '98BA/H&S '98MT** and **Benjamin Griffon '98BA/H&S '98MT** were married on October 11, 2003. She is a teacher and English Department chair at Fairfield Middle School in Henrico County, VA. He is a graphic designer with Howell Design. • **Mary Francis '95BS/H&S** is an SLD teacher for the Chesterfield County, VA Public Schools. • **\*Rowena Fratarcangelo '93MBA** married Rowland Johnson on July 19, 2003. She is a property manager for Circuit City, Inc. • **Gregory Galbraith '94MS/MC** is an ad manager for Nike Corporation Advertising. • **Donald Garland '94BFA** is creative director for Walz Terrick Advertising in the Florida Office. • **Melissa Garland '91BFA** is product director for Tk20 in Austin, TX. • **Ryan Gilliam '99BFA** is a senior CAD

designer with Home Builder in Midlothian, VA. • **Stephen Golding '90MURP** is manager of Business Support and Development for the city of Rochester, NY. • **\*Joan Goodman '91BA '94MS/H&S** is a law clerk for the Supreme Court of Virginia. • **Roger Gorey '91BGS/H&S** is vice president of PMGlobal in Durham, NC. • **Michael Gorman '93MS/MC** is city editor for Thibodaux, LA Daily Comet. • **Stephen Gratz '93BS/B** married Ann Haskell on September 27, 2003. • **David Graves '92BS/H&S** is a network administrator for Virginia Asset Management in Richmond. • **Robert Greene '92BS/H&S** is president and CEO of the National Association of Investment Companies in Washington DC. • **Julie Gregory '98BS/H&S** is a quality assurance specifications coordinator for Wyeth Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, where she lives. • **James Griffin '99BS/B** is a development database administrator for Aetna Insurance in Blue Bell, PA. • **Hiliary Guess '90BA/H&S** is a property manager with Clachan Properties, LLC in Richmond. • **Tracy Hale '94BS/B** is an account executive for JRL Creative Marketing in Richmond. • **Kathleen Hall '90MBA** is owner of Marathon Marketing in Richmond. • **Sigmundur Halldorsson '90BS/MC** is webmaster for Icelandair in Reykjavik. • **Sean Hamilton '97BS/H&S** is a special education teacher for Page County Public Schools in Luray, VA. • **Bradley Hanks '98BS/MC** is a call center analyst for Time-Life in Richmond. • **Jeannine Harkleroad '98BFA** received the \$50,000 Visual Gift of Freedom Award sponsored by the A Room of Her Own Foundation. • **Wayne Hatten '98BS/H&S** is a sales manager for Telecom in Falls Church, VA. • **Ashley Haug '98MS/MC** married Brian Sommardehl on July 19, 2003. She is an account executive for The Martin Agency in Richmond. • **Jonathan Heglund '98BFA** is a network engineer for Sprint in Reston, VA. • **Mary Heller '99BA/H&S** is a student advisor at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. • **\*Thomas House '95BGS/H&S** is a financial division police officer with the VCU Police. • **Lindsay Howerton '92BFA** is moderator of online discussion for *Washingtonpost.com* in Charlottesville, VA. • **Kevin Hudson '97BS/H&S** is a pre-release and internal investigator for the Rappahannock Regional Jail in Stafford, VA. • **Morgan Huff '95BA/H&S** is a multimedia designer for Media General in Richmond. • **Keith Ingram '94BS/B** is a CPT in the 82nd Airborne Division for the U.S. Army in Fayetteville, NC. • **Adam Jackson '99BS/MC** is a registration and licensing coordinator for Wachovia Securities LCC in Glen Allen. He lives in Richmond. • **Elizabeth Johnson '98BS/MC** married Ryan Greczek on September 27, 2003. • **Martin Johnson '99BS/MC** and **Elizabeth Danielson '99BS/H&S** were married on July 19, 2003. She teaches at Prince George

County Schools and is a lobbyist with Virginia Association of Realtors. • **Lynnette Jones '90BS/MC** is a producer for Scripps Productions in NYC. • **William Kanto III '95MBA** owns GDO Capital in Wayne, PA. • **Andrew Kaplan '97BS/MC** is a broadband technician for Comcast in Richmond, where he lives. • **Colby Kay '94BS/H&S** is the community development director at the YMCA of Chester, VA. • **P. Lynne Kelly '97MFA** works for the College of William & Mary in accounting. • **Christina Kettenacker '93BS/MC** married James Holt on January 3, 2004. • **Sharon Klotz '96MED** married Mark Pittman on October 4, 2003. • **Jessica Kovalcik '93BFA** gave birth to a son, August Hayes, on June 20, 2002. • **\*Demris Lee '90BS/H&S** is technical leader and laboratory manager at the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory in Rockville, MD. She received the Civilian Meritorious and Special Recognition awards from the Armed Forces IP for her work identifying victims of September 11 attacks. • **Felicia Lewis '96BS/B** is a marketing specialist for Divaris Real Estate, Inc. in Richmond. • **John Lindsey '90BFA** is the senior manager of creative services at the Consumer Electronics Association in Arlington, VA. He lives in Falls Church, VA. • **Jeffrey Link '95BS/B** is director of process improvement for Best Software in Scottsdale, AZ. • **Stephen Loderick '99MBA** is vice president, CFO, and treasurer for W.R. Berkley Corporation Mid-Atlantic Group in Richmond. • **Robert Lumley '95MBA** is vice president for Newman Capital in Denver. He lives in Littleton, CO. • **Edward Macejka '95BS/MC** is an operations manager for the Northeast division of AXA Advisors, LLC in Falls Church, VA. • **J. Dan Martin '90BS/B** is the regional manager for Ameritas Group Dental & Eye Care in Dallas. • **Neely Martin '95BFA** married Brian Crum on September 13, 2003. She is employed at Circuit City in Richmond, where they live. • **Laura Matney '88BS '91MS/H&S** is a managing attorney with Matney Law Firm, LLC, in Rockville, MD, where she lives. • **Julia May '95MA '99PhD/A** is an associate curator for the Kluge-Ruhe Collection at the University of Virginia. • **\*Larry McCauley '91BS/B** works for Capital One in the technology delivery department in Glen Allen, VA. • **Heather McHugh '96BS/B** married Bryan White on March 27, 2004. • **Dmitry Melnick '98BS/B** is the equity linked products division vice president for Wachovia Securities in Old Greenwich, CT. • **Kelli Miller '91BS/MC** is managing editor for NewsRX in Atlanta. She also owns NewScience. • **Max Miller '92BS/MC** was named "Director of Operations of the Year-Large Market" for Metro Networks, in Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX. • **Michelle Miller '99BA/H&S '99MT** is a financial advisor with American Express Financial Advisors in Centerville, VA. • **Franklin Monsour '99BA/H&S** is a law clerk for the United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit in New York City. • **Mickey Moore '90BS/B** is a new product implementation leader for GE Financial Assurance in Lynchburg, VA. • **Timothy Morris '98BS/B** is a fraud prevention manager with



MBNA America. He lives in Newark, DE. • **Michelle Moyer '91BFA** is the creative director for Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc. in Bridgewater, VA. • **Robin Nelson '95BFA** is a project manager for Carolina Business Interiors in Charlotte, NC. • **Catherine (Price) Newman '96BFA** married Greg Newman on June 8, 2002. They live in Richmond. Catherine is a senior account executive at Bank of America. • **Shelley Nichols '92BFA** is owner of Ultimate Cake in Malmö, Sweden. • **Roger Nicholson '68BS/H&S '97PhD/E** is the associate minister for the First Presbyterian Church in Pensacola, FL. • **Melissa Nolan '93BS/MC** married John Barkley on September 27, 2003. • **Kevin Nybakken '96MSW** is a psychiatric social worker for the Moccasin Band Mental Health Institute in Chattanooga, TN. • **Chioma Onyekwere '91BS/H&S** is president of The CO Group in Yonkers, NY, where she lives. • **Frances Owens '94BSW** works in human resources at VMS, Inc. in Richmond. • **Kimberly Pallister '93BS/MC** is a software engineer for Northrop Grumman. She lives in Leesburg, VA. • **Leander Pambid '96BS/H&S** is the town planner for Town of South Boston, VA. • **Alvin Pearsall '97BS/H&S** married Renée Crocker on September 27, 2003. • **Jason Pensler '96BS/H&S** is a gifted and talented school-based specialist for Fairfax County Public Schools. • **William Person '92BFA** is the webmaster for The Gideons International in Nashville. • **Richard Pfamatter '92BS/MC** is an account executive for Clear Channel advertising in Richmond. • **Caryn Persinger '91BFA** is a publications manager and webmaster for the Virginia State Bar in Richmond. • **Steven Picciacchio '94MBA** is the plant manager for Alisco Metals Corporation in Richmond. • **Patrick Piggott '89BS/H&S '93MSW** is a clinical coordinator for the Division of Mental Health at the Wright School in Durham, NC. • **Brian Pike '92BS/95MS/96PhD/H&S** is the scientific review administrator for the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. • **Thaylene Pinnick '92BA** is a children's pastor at the Peerless Road Church in Cleveland, TN. • **Philip Pippert '90MS/B** is a Global Finance group manager for Capital One in Glen Allen, VA. • **Isai Pochtar '96BS/B** married Patricia Davin on November 29, 2003. • **Edward Powers '96MFA** is an associate professor of theatre at Clarion University in PA. • **Paul Pritchett '92BS/MC** is a marketing director at Smith Container Corporation in Forest Park, GA. He lives in Smyrna, GA. • **Christen Proffitt '97BS/H&S** is a family nurse practitioner with the Hopewell Medical Group in Virginia. • **Alexis Rada-Ragland '99BA/H&S '99MT** married Donald Ragland on August 2, 2003. She works for Capital One. • **Heather Ramey '96BFA** is a designer for Mudd Brand junior jeans in NYC. • **Samantha Ratchford '97BS/H&S '99Med** is a school counselor for Spotsylvania County, VA Public Schools. • **Cheryl Ray '98BFA** married Keith Burns on October 18, 2003. She works for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management in

Richmond. • **Hope Redding '96BS/MC** is a circulation analyst for Primedia, Inc. in NYC. • **Kelley Reed '92BS/MC** is the principal consultant for Keane Inc. in Centreville, VA. • **Richard Reinecke '96BS** is the founder and managing director of Career Quest, LLC, and co-founder of Career Partners Network. • **Christy Reyes '96BA/H&S** is a corporate paralegal with Sunrise Senior Living, Inc. in McLean, VA. • **Calvin Richardson '93BA/H&S** is a probation officer for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice in Farmville, VA. • **Ervin Richardson '90MBA** is the corporate quality manager for Southern Graphic Systems in Richmond. He lives in Midlothian, VA. • **Timothy Roberts '88BFA '97MFA** is director of marketing and publications for the University of Richmond in Virginia. • **Melissa Robison '92BS/MC** is a web producer for Threespot Media in Washington, DC. • **Joann Robinson '95BS/B** is an HR consultant for the VA Department of Rehabilitative Services. • **Cecily Rodriguez '92BA/H&S** is a deputy state director for Telamon Corporation in Richmond. • **Patricia Rollston '98BS/B** is the executive secretary for Virginia's Department of Juvenile Justice. • **Roy Roper '98BA/H&S** married Kimberly Woodward on September 6, 2003. • **Joel Rosen '96BFA** is a visual interaction designer for Kodak. He lives in Rochester, NY. • **Eric Rossi '90BS/H&S** is director of database marketing for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in Fort Worth, TX. • **Manya Rosypal '98MT** married Scott Saunders on August 23, 2003. • **Nicole Samuel '97BS/H&S** is and LTJG for the U.S. Coast Guard in Honolulu, HI where she lives. • **David Sanchez-Burr '93BFA** is manager of the graduate program at San Francisco Art Institute in CA. • **Deborah Savitt '93BFA** is a senior art director at Dittus Communications in Washington DC. She lives in Arlington, VA. • **Suzanne Schicklin '97BS/H&S** is a marketing coordinator at the James River Financial Corporation. • **Kirk Schmitt '99MBA** is a research analyst with Victory Capital Management in Cleveland. • **Matthias Schmitt '98MBA** works with European institutional investors at Pursuit Partners, in Stamford, CT. • **Leslie (Ferre) Schrier '98MSW** married Stephen Schrier on November 22, 2003. • **Kiascha Scott '98BS/B** is an application analyst for Bond International Software in Richmond, where she lives. • **Shela Silverman '94MSW** is the director of Contac Del Oeste in Las Vegas, where she lives. • **Kisha Skinner '97BS/MC** is a managing director for Blackberry Productions, Inc. in NYC. • **Susan Spain '93BS '01MS/H&S** is a research associate at Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory in Richmond where she lives. • **Anders Steele '98BGS** is a sound engineer for Eightball Films in Chicago, where he lives. • **Matthew St. Louis '91BS/H&S** is

president of Mobjack Bay Arts in Susan, VA. • **David Stocker '98BM** runs and manages Thenotesetter.com. • **C. Darnell Stroble '91BS/H&S** works for the US Department of Justice as an assistant regional counsel in Atlanta. • **Anthony Stuart '95BS/B** is a business instructor at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic College in St. Michael, Barbados. • **Michael Sturtz '99BS/H&S** married Michelle Scott on September 6, 2003. He is a chemical technician at the Ethyl Corporation. • **Jacqueline Stutz '93MURP/H&S** is the program administrator for planning and development in Chesapeake, VA Public Schools. • **Susanne Sweeney '98BA/H&S** is an inventory analyst for Circuit City Stores, Inc. in Richmond. • **David Taylor '92BS/B** is an operations manager of P.M. Foods, Inc. for Petroleum Marketers, Inc. in Roanoke, VA. • **Tiffany (Miller) Taylor '97BS/MC** married Lonnie Taylor on July 6, 2002. She gave birth to her first son, Christian Immanuel Taylor, on September 24, 2003. They live in Greensboro, NC. • **Dawn Hudson-Thomas '93BM/A** is a band/orchestra teacher at Danville City School in Danville, VA. • **Pascale Thomas '97BS/B '99MBA** is a senior business systems analyst at Capital One in Richmond. • **Thomas Thompson '86BS/H&S '93MBA** is the director of utilities at VCU. • **Kevin Timme '99BS/H&S** is a server and bartender at Buckhead's Chop House in Richmond. • **Jennifer Troch '95MBA** is a communications specialist for Cisco Systems, Inc. in North Carolina. • **Milton Tyler III '90BS/B** is engineering systems manager for Alstom Power, Inc. in Midlothian, VA. • **Scott VanBenschoten '99MSW** is a fellow in the Robert Wood Johnson program Developing Leadership in Reducing Substance Abuse. He is also an assistant director for Chesterfield County, VA Community Corrections. • **Eryck Van Ryn '91BS/MC** is an inside sale manager for PrimeStock Communications in MD. • **David Vaughan '93BS/B** owns David F. Vaughan, P.C. in Ashland, VA, where he lives. • **Cari Walters '98BFA** is district manager for Primerica in Virginia. • **Timothy Warner '92BS/B** is a senior program analyst in Program Development and Management for NASA in Hampton, VA. • **Deborah Watson '99MED** is coordinator of Global Information Services for Altria Group, Inc. in Pittsburgh. • **Mary Webster '98BS/B** married David Deas IV on September 27, 2003. • **Heather Wheeler '98BS/H&S** is a human relations specialist at Philip Morris. On April 19, 2003 she and her husband Brad had their first child, Ava Elizabeth. • **Jason Whitehead '96BA/H&S** is an apprentice of historic masonry trades with Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. • **Byron Whitted '93BS/H&S** is an operations manager for FedEx Express in Petersburg, VA. • **Johnny Wilkinson '90BS/B** is owner and president of Wilkinson Consulting LLC



# "Now at bat for the Chicks, 'Gig' Smith."

BY WANDA FISCHER



When **Helen Smith '51BFA** needed to finance her education, she decided to swing for the fences. Literally.

Smith went to bat with the All American Girls' Professional Baseball League, featured in the movie, *A League of Their Own*. She played center field for the Kenosha Comets and the Grand Rapids Chicks in 1947-48. The League years were 1943-54.

In 1940, at graduation from John Marshall High School in Richmond, Smith was Outstanding Girl Athlete, lettering in all four sports open to women—field hockey,

basketball, track and tennis. For the next five years she played for three clubs, earning a reputation as one of the top fast pitch softball players in the area—"slow pitch is for sissies." A clean-up hitter, she averaged a home run per game in her last three years of club ball. Her record gave her a place in the National Softball Hall of Fame in 1975 for Virginia fast pitch.

"I was offered a contract to play ball for the Girls' League in 1943, but there was a war going on," she recalls. "I joined the Army."

Smith illustrated training aids and the WAC newspaper; and she played fast pitch softball on a women's team at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. "Nobody else was stupid enough to catch, so I volunteered." She remembers blasting two grand slam homers at a state tournament. In 1944 she was transferred to Army Military Intelligence at the Pentagon to work on top secret cartography in the war against Japan.

The Army also gave Smith her baseball moniker, "Gig." "It stands for Government Issued Grip," she laughs. (Not her gripe;

the sergeant's, at inspection, she clarifies.) As a female veteran, she is on the Board of the Army Women's Museum at Fort Lee, Virginia, and involved with the memorial to U.S. servicewomen at Arlington National Cemetery.\*

"After I left the Army, I was attending Pratt Art Institute in New York City and realized that I needed a way to pay for college, so I called to ask if I could still join the League. The girls who played made excellent salaries for that time, \$45-85 a week. We also worked hard and practiced hard."

A third baseman, Smith became a League center fielder by accident. "Another Helen Smith had been a center fielder the year before I joined. So when I showed up, they just assumed that I could play center field. I really could play most any position," she adds.

After spring training in Florida, the AAGPBL played exhibition games up the East Coast on the way to home cities. In 1948 "we flew to Cuba for exhibition games "before thousands of exuberant fans who loved baseball. They also loved the blond American girls!"

The Women's League was formed to keep baseball going during the war; officials were afraid the major leagues would fold when so many players were being recruited to fight. "We had a captive audience. Everyone was so confined then. We had gas rationing, and there were no cars to buy because factories had been converted to war production; so people stayed close to home. Watching the women play baseball was a great diversion, an important form of entertainment."

The League took players' position as role models (and their fans' sensibilities) seriously, enforcing a strict dress code. In the Charm Guide (really), the women were told what make-up to use and how to wear their hair. "We could not wear shorts or slacks in public." Gig explains, "You could play golf or tennis and be a lady, but there was a stigma to women playing baseball. So, we had to wear dresses or skirts. They wanted us to look like ladies off the field but play exciting baseball on the field, just like the men."

She had met that attitude before. Her father supported her athletic endeavors, but her mother, "a white glove lady," was

in Centerville, VA. • **Jeff Williams '91BS/MC** is a communications manager for Weather Shield Windows & Doors in Medford, WI. • **\*David Wright '87BS/B '93MBA** is director of Enterprise Technology Services for Capital One in VA. • **Eugene Yim '91BS/B** is a business consultant at The DLC in Los Angeles. • **Heather York '98BA/H&S '98MT**, Richmond's 2004 Teacher of the Year, teaches third grade at Bellevue Elementary in Richmond. • **John Zanone III '90BS/B** is a senior consultant for Spherion in McLean, VA. • **Melissa Zervos '91BA/H&S** is an adult education instructional specialist for the Montgomery County, MD Public Schools. • **\*David Zimmerman '96BS/B** and **Courtney Ladd '99MS/PT** were married on September 27, 2003. • **Deane Potter-Zimmerman '92BFA** is a proprietor for Deane & Co. Interiors located in Virginia Beach, VA.

The Neighborliness quartet was chosen for the US State Department's Jazz Ambassadors Program. Clarinetist and sax player **John Winn '93BM '95MM** is

also a well-reviewed vocalist and a faculty member in VCU's Music Department. Pianist **Daniel Clarke '01BM**, bassist **Curtis Fye '02BM** and drummer **Robby Sinclair '02BM** join Winn to play American swing for audiences in Cambodia, South Korea and Vladivostok in May and June.

## 2000s

**Melissa Ahrens '02BSW** is a social worker on the Family and Children's Team for the Charlottesville, VA Department of Social Services. • **Betty Alexis '00BS/H&S** teaches at Richmond Public Schools; she lives in Richmond. • **Rhonda Allen '01BS/B** is a business education teacher for the City of Richmond. • **Michael Amodie '03BS/B** has joined Keiter, Stephens, Hurst, Gary, and Shreaves as an associate in their Tax unit. • **Audur Arnardottir '99MS '01PhD/H&S** is a psychologist at Reykjavik University in Reykjavik, Iceland. • **Brian Ashford '01PhD/B** is CIO of the Army Logistics Management College in Ft. Lee, VA. He lives in Richmond. • **Dawn (Taylor) Bahen '02BS/H&S '02MT** married J.

Michael Bahen on June 21, 2003. •

**\*Michael Bailey '03BS/B** is a tax assessment specialist for Chesterfield County-Commissioner of Revenue. • **Allison Bew '01BS/H&S '01MT** married Joshua Harper on April 3, 2004. • **Marilyn Bishop '02MBA** is a systems analyst for the Federal Reserve Bank. • **Christopher Blake '01MBA** married Megan Heaslip on December 20, 2003. He is a project manager with Miller & Associates real estate in Richmond. • **Sara Bogdan '01BA** is a loan counselor for Merrill Lynch in Jacksonville, FL. She lives in Atlantic Beach, FL. • **Mark Boito '02BS/B** married Lauren Cook on February 14, 2004. • **Joshua Bond '01BFA** manages a costume shop at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where he lives. • **Lisa Bradley '01BFA** received an NEA Professional Development Fellowship for Artists. She is a resident fellow at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in NYC. • **Lynette Branch '01BS/H&S** is director of client services for Virginia Investment Advisory in Richmond. • **Stephanie Braxton '02BS/H&S** is a



definitely opposed. Neither her brother Hugh nor her older sister Elizabeth was particularly athletic.

When Smith got back to RPI (now VCU) in 1948, her "team-mates" there were high-powered as well. Painter **Judith Godwin '52BFA**, designer **David Sauer '50BFA** and theatre major **Bob Watkins '48BFA '50MFA** garnered national and international renown. Smith's advisor in art education was Ruth Highland, daughter of RPI founder Henry Hibbs.

Helen is 82 now, and baseball is still opening doors. When *Dare to Compete*, an HBO special about female athletes' struggles, premiered at the White House, Gig met President Bill and First Lady Hillary Clinton. "Tennis greets Billie Jean King and Chrissie Everett, Olympic swimmer Donna DeVarone, basketball star Lisa Leslie—they were all there, and I represented our baseball league."

When *A League of Their Own* came out, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* invited her to watch with a reporter and critique the movie. The film was fairly true to life, she says, though "a little Hollywood" in places. "The movie showed how truly awful the uniforms were. The girls were injured a lot when they were sliding into bases or hit by foul balls. We often had 'strawberries'—big bruises—on our legs. Sliding was the worst for injuries." Smith stole only two bases in the AAGPBL. She remembers Sophie Kurys, stolen base queen of the League, who stole more than 1,000 (ouch!) during her career.

"The movie opened up so much for us," Smith says. "It's wonderful that girls today aren't stigmatized as athletes. It's about time that women earned the kind of money that some of the big athletes are being paid. If a girl has the ability and drive to go to the top, she should." The teacher in her cautions, "I don't think parents should push children—boys or girls—if they don't have the talent to be a professional athlete."

Smith returned to Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame in September for an AAGPBL reunion. "The exhibition on women's baseball is quite inspiring. They didn't induct just one of us into the Hall of Fame, they inducted *all* of us." Two days before the induction, several of them were invited to the Championship T-Ball Tournament on the White House Lawn, where she met



President George W. Bush, Laura Bush, Cal Ripken and Dottie Richardson, an Olympic Gold Medalist at Atlanta.

"You are stressing baseball," says Smith, "but my 31 years of teaching were extremely rewarding." She taught art and shop in Richmond Public Schools, breaking another gender barrier. "In those days, women didn't teach shop."

Smith spent her last eight years teaching emotionally disturbed children, all grades, at Westhampton School. "I had to learn a totally different way of handling kids. You had to back into a situation; you didn't go headlong. I loved those kids. They shared more of themselves in art and shop because it was freer."

"My three great interests in life," Smith sums up, "were the Army, baseball and teaching. I'm still involved with all three, and I wouldn't trade any of them for another."

More information at [www.aagpbl.org](http://www.aagpbl.org).

*\*To complete memorial records, Gig urges all women who served in the armed forces to contact Memorial Foundation, Dept. 560, Washington, DC 20042-0560.*

*Wanda Fischer plays competitive tennis, loves baseball and folk music. Producer Ken Burns used songs he heard on her radio show in his PBS series on baseball. Her own CD is Singing Along with the Radio.*

project discovery coordinator for Powhatan Goochland Community Action Agency in Goochland, VA, where she lives. • **Victoria Brock '00BFA** works for the Classic Printing Center, Inc. in Chantilly, VA in sales and graphic design. • **Erika Brooks '99BS '02MS/H&S** is a family therapist at Clinical Alternatives, P.C. in Richmond. She lives in Doswell, VA. • **Bryan Bryant '00BS/B** is a senior associate for Pricewaterhouse Coopers in the Assurance and Business Advisory Division in Washington, DC. • **Edward Buchanan '00BS/En** is an engineering project manager for English Boiler and Tube, Inc. in Richmond. • **Kim Carlton '81BS/H&S '02MS/B** is a software development manager for Capital One Financial in Richmond. • **Andrea Carson '02MS/E** is a program director at the Southeast 4-H Educational Center in Wakefield, VA. She lives in Smithfield, VA. • **Matt Charles '01MPA** is a child abuse investigator for the Administration for Children's Services. He married Melissa Bryant on May 31, 2003. They live in Manhattan. • **Brian Collins '00MEd** is a psychologist for the VA

Department of Corrections in State Farm, VA. • **Donald Cosgrove '03BS/B** is a supervisor for UPS in Richmond. • **Robert Croft '00BS '02MS/En** is a mechanical design engineer for Dominion VA Power. • **Jeremy Cropp's '03BFA** film, *Relative Movements*, was screened at the Dance on Camera Festival in NYC in January, 2004. • **\*Bradford Crosby '01BS/En** is a lithography technical supervisor for Infineon Technologies Richmond. • **\*William Crowder '02BS/B** is a systems technician at Citizens & Farmers Bank in West Point, VA. • **Lauren (Purcell) Cummings '01BS/E** married Deward Cummings III on October 18, 2003. They live in Virginia Beach. • **Sam Dalton '02BS/B** is a capture manager for CMS Information Services, Inc. in Vienna, VA. He lives in Fairfax, VA. • **Nahom Debessay '02BS/E** is an associate engineer at Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, CT. • **\*Kathryn DeFilippo '03BA/H&S** is an appointments specialist in the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office for the Office of the Governor of Virginia. • **\*Leigh Ann Dicken '03BSW** is the director of social

services at Our Lady of Hope Health Center. • **Shannon Dowdy '02BS/En** is a photolithography process engineer for Infineon. • **\*Dewitt Drinkard '00MS/H&S** is an assistant professor of psychology for Danville Community College in Danville, VA. • **Dawn Edge '01BFA** is a litigation support associate at Hunton & Williams in Richmond, where she lives. • **\*Jeffrey Elmore '01MEd** is an academic instructor at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women. • **DuRaun Epps '01BFA** is a graphic designer and web editor for North Arundel Hospital in Glen Burnie, MD. • **Courtney Etheridge '03BS/B** is a broadcast traffic coordinator for Moroch and Associates in Dallas. • **Elizabeth Farina '03BS/MC** is a staff writer for Womack Publishing Co. • **Brett Fullam '01BFA** is an art director for Huntley Design in Richmond, where he lives. • **Tiara Gantt '02BA/H&S** is office manager of Student Affairs at VCU. • **James Gibson '03C/B** is a credit, risk and IT analyst for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. • **David Glassman '03MBA** is the president of Fifth Point Properties, LLC in Lexington, VA,



where he lives. • **Patrick Godfrey '02BFA** is an illustrator and owner of Velocity Comics in Richmond. He co-founded Oddgod Press. • **Erin Gray '03BS/H&S** is VCU's coordinator for Information & Off Campus Student Services. • **Brianne (Duty) Gunn '00BS/H&S** married Stefan Gunn on April 26, 2003. • **Sopha Guthrie '01BS/B** is a project coordinator with Capital One Financial Corporation in Richmond. • **Terry Hall '02BS/MC** is CEO of Creative Type in Richmond. • **April Halstead '03BS/H&S** is a customer service representative with Wachovia Bank. • **Leslie (Wood) Hardesty '01BS/B** married Nicholas Hardesty on May 17, 2002. She is a staff accountant at Deloitte & Touche, LLP in Richmond, where they live. • **Fredrick Harmeling '00MBA** is works for Dominion Resources in project managing and consulting. • **Buffy Harwood '00BS/B** is vice president and director of online services for the Independent Brokerage Group of Wachovia Securities in Richmond, VA. • **Donna (Smelly) Harwood '02BA/A** is co-director of sales for Victoria's Secret in Richmond. • **Michelle Hassler '00MS/H&S** is a criminalist in the Forensic Biology section of the San Diego Sheriff's Crime Lab. • **Russell**

**Henderson '00BS/H&S** is an analyst for BrownGreer PLC in Richmond. • **Bryan Hill '02BS/H&S** is a planner II for the Town of Culpepper in Virginia. • **Casey Hill '02BS/H&S** married Stacey Barrow on August 16, 2003. They live in Richmond. • **George Hoang '01BS/B** is a claims adjuster for Southern Insurance. • **Mary Huff '01BS/B** is a personal sales representative for Liberty Mutual in Richmond. • **Janelle Jennings '00Med** is the Westhampton College associate dean at the University of Richmond. • **Lamar Jeter '00BS/B** is an IT support specialist with Pittsylvania County Schools. He lives in Chatham, VA. • **Jeremy Jones '03BS/B** is president of Huddle Up Sports, Inc. in Highland Springs, VA. • **Carol Keith '81BS/B '02MBA** is manager of the customer relationship management division of Federal Reserve Information Technology in Richmond. • **Joseph Knott '01BS/E** married Michelle Burton on May 17, 2003. • **Kristin (Beran) Krupp '03BS/MC** married Bryan Krupp on June 28, 2003. They live in Chesterfield County, VA. • **Alina Lacey '01BS/H&S** is an organizational development specialist for P&L Publishing in Evergreen Park, IL. • **Nan Leiningner '02MSW** established the

Child Protection Resource Center of Virginia. • **Temeka Loney '00BS/H&S** is an office services assistant for the Virginia State Police. • **Christopher Lowry '02BS/H&S** married Robyn Willhide '96MS/AH on October 5, 2003. • **Kelly Machett '00BS/B** is an external affairs business development analyst for Universal Corporation in Richmond. • **Kevin Mack '00BS/MC** married Moneke Archer on March 6, 2004. • **Mohit Mago '97BS/B '01MBA** is an analyst and statistic reporter for Wachovia Securities in Richmond, where he lives. • **Sonia Marfatia '02BS/B** is a recruiter at BranCore Technologies in Richmond. • **Melina Davis-Martin '01MBA** is the president of the Central Virginia Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. • **Roberta McKnight '88BS '01PhD/E** is a research specialist for the Virginia Literacy Institute. • **Jean Mendelis '93BS/H&S '03MT** is a social studies teacher at James River High School in Midlothian, VA. • **Teri Morton '00BS/H&S** married Allen Johnson on November 22, 2003. • **Paul NeSmith '00BS/B** is a property manager for Commercial Investment Associates in Richmond. • **Sabina Newton '01MSW** is an

## In Memoriam

### Charismatic

VCU freshman Nicole Marie Megaloudis died February 9, 2004, in an automobile accident. She was 19.

A soccer player whose father and stepfather were soccer professionals, Megaloudis "had already had an immediate impact," for her skill and her heart, VCU Coach Chris Brown told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. The midfielder/forward scored the winning goal in the season opener against UNC Asheville and played in all 20 of VCU's 2003 games. Brown added, "It's going to be impossible to replace the energy and enthusiasm she brought to every day."

### Long-Term, High-Energy Commitment

**Dr. Wyndam Bolling Blanton Jr. '50MD '52HS** died October 28, 2003, in Richmond at 84. He was a fourth-generation physician and MCV alumnus, and a clinical professor and former assistant dean in the School of Medicine. Blanton was VCU rector from 1972-1980, the longest term in the school's history. He had been on the University's Board of Visitors since 1969. He also served on the boards of the VCU and MCV Foundations.

While in private practice, he became vice president for medical affairs at Charter Medical Corp. Blanton also raised Holsteins, breeding them to produce more nutrient-rich milk without growth hormones.

"Dr. Blanton's life was one of giving," said President Eugene Trani. "We will miss his positive influence and inspiration."

### Soaring Traveler

Internationally acclaimed painter and designer **Arthur Biehl '50BFA**, died at home in Venice, Florida, on April 3, 2004, after a five-year battle with cancer. He was 77. Biehl taught in the Department of Communications Arts and Design from 1953-74 and was chair in the early 1970s.

"Art was not only a masterful designer but was also an accomplished painter whose skillfully executed paintings were carried by galleries and in New York, Florida and Europe," his colleague Chuck Scaln told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Biehl won a national design award in 1965 for one of his most visible works, the graceful seagull logo for the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. He received the 1987 Presidential Award for outstanding contributions to the arts in the U.S.

### Generous Mentor

**Akira Ouchi** died at home in west Henrico County, December 11, 2003, after five and a half years fighting colon cancer. He was 69. Ouchi had retired only last year from his position as associate professor of communication design at VCU, where he has taught since coming to Richmond from Tokyo in 1982.

Illustrator Timothy Cook spoke about his former teacher with the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Cook remembers with delight Ouchi showing his students' best work, "pointing out, in what seemed like a state of rapture, conceptual breakthroughs, unusual solutions, complex relationships."

In the 1980s Ouchi volunteered with Richmond's Metropolitan Economic

Development Council and designed a branding strategy to entice Japanese companies to the area.

### Inside History

**Dr. Henri Jacques Warmenhoven**, emeritus professor, died January 17, 2004, at 79. He had taught political science, comparative governments, and Western European history at VCU for 23 years, from 1968 until he retired in 1991.

Warmhoven wrote a Western European history textbook now in its seventh edition. But history's violent lessons were personal. As a teenager, When the Japanese invaded his home in Java in 1942, the teenager was separated from his family and placed in a POW camp.

After liberation, he earned a law degree in the The Netherlands and lived in Dutch New Guinea and Australia before coming to VCU.

### Man of the World

**Dr. William John Beck**, VCU professor emeritus of French, died on February 14, 2004, in Richmond. He was 78. Beck was founding chair of the foreign language department from 1969-1985. He added courses in Latin, Greek, Russian and Italian; developed courses for nonmajors; set up VCU's first study abroad program; and was president of the Virginia Council for Study Abroad.

The son of Polish immigrants and fluent in many languages, Beck founded language banks at VCU and at the Red Cross to provide translators for non-English speaking people. In the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, colleague Dr. Margaret Peischl remembered a small man of



emergency services counselor for CSB in the mental health division. • **Phat Nguyen '01BS/H&S** is a physician in Manchester, NH. • **Marybeth Norton '01BFA** is a graphic artist for Capital One with Aquent in VA. • **Meghan O'Flinn '01BSW '03MSW** is a children and family services mental health case manager for the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority. • **Onalee Ojibway '01BS/E** married Michael Taylor on June 14, 2003. • **James Opalka '03MBA** married Kristin Martin on September 27, 2003. • **Jeffrey Parrish '00BS/H&S** is the Deputy Sheriff for Hanover County. • **Curtesa Pennington '00BS/MC** is an advertising coordinator for *Print Solutions Magazine* in Alexandria, VA. • **Aimee Perron '02MSW** drafted bill 893 passed in the Virginia General Assembly in February 2003. She is now legislative director for the ACLU of Virginia. • **Christian Porter '03BFA** is a graphic designer for the Ethyl Corporation. • **Rob Przybylski '00BS/H&S** is a captain of Infantry for the US Army. • **Odell Ramirez '03BS/B** is a partner of Ubertechnics in Richmond, where he lives. • **Marika Rasmussen '00BS/H&S** is a project assistant for Ferring International. She lives in Copenhagen. • **Ruth Redbird '03BS/H&S** is

a laboratory assistant for Virginia Tech in Engineering/Research. • **Loretta Hayes-Richardson '00BGS/H&S** is a registered nurse for VCU Health Systems. • **John Robinson '03MBA** is a staff analyst for Southern Financial Bank in Richmond. • **Elizabeth Salomonsky '02BS/B** owns Sky Computers in Richmond, where she lives. • **\*Timothy Sartini '00C/B** is a program manager for VDDT in Richmond. He lives in Mechanicsville, VA. • **Brian Schaneberg '00PhD/H&S** is an analytical senior chemist for ChromaDex Analytics in Boulder, CO. • **Stephanie Schwickerath '02BA/H&S** teaches English at Henrico County Public Schools. She lives in Richmond. • **Aaron Scruggs '03BS/En** is a realtor for Long & Foster in Richmond. • **Murad Shahid '02BS/H&S** teaches at Garfield Senior High School in Woodbridge, VA. He lives in Dale City, VA. • **\*Laura Siewert '03BFA** works full time at Motion Capture Studio in Los Angeles and is a freelance compositor. She has done visual effects work for the movies *The Polar Express* and *Spiderman 2*. • **Percy Smith '03BS/B** is a locomotive engineer for CSX Transportation in Richmond, where he lives. • **Stefanie (Herron) Smith '01MA/H&S** married Ian

**Smith '01BA/H&S** in June 2002. She is a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Delaware. He is a loan officer at Virginia HomeLoan, LC. They live in Ruthr Glen, VA. • **Heather Smithson '96BS/B '00C/B** is vice president of Roden Personnel, Inc. in Richmond. • **Mario Souza '96BS/AH '00C/B** is a software developer for SAIC in McLean, VA. He lives in Vienna, VA. • **\*Thelma Stockton '00BGS/H&S** is a financial systems instructor at VCU in the Department of Procurement and Payment. • **Meredith Sullivan '03MS/E** is a regional sales manager for Washington Capitals in Washington, DC. • **Ryan Sutelan '01BS/B** is president of Classic Vision Productions in NYC. • **Douglas Taylor Jr '01BS/B** is a senior account executive for Beneficial Finance in Virginia Beach. • **Tara Leach-Thomas '00BS/H&S** teaches math and science for Roanoke City Public Schools in VA. • **\*William Toots '00BS/MC** is an ESPN studio technician in Bristol, CT. • **Geralyn Trujillo '02BS/B** is a scientific program coordinator with the American Psychiatric Association in Arlington, VA. She lives in Stafford, VA. • **Bernell Turner-Holmes '02BSW '03MSW** married William Holmes

tremendous energy—verbal and physical. "His classes were so lively and so entertaining. I don't think he was ever bored."

### A Familiar Voice, Silent

Scott Stevens died of a heart attack in Vail, Colorado in September, 2003. He was 44.

A voice heard often in Richmond, as "Clint Smith" on Q-94 in the '90s and later reporting on traffic for Clear Channel, Stevens taught electronic media writing and voice at the School of Mass Communications. His widow Lisa Smith wrote in a letter to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* that "he had a passion for being on the radio here, and for sharing that enthusiasm with his students at VCU." Former student Kevin Bailey '03BS/MC noted in Richmond.com, "Stevens critiqued me as a professional not as a teacher." In December, 2003, Smith set up the Scott Stevens Scholarship for broadcasting students at VCU.

### Stage Presence

Marvin Sims, head of performance in the Department of Theatre at VCU, died of a heart attack while visiting friends in Gainesville, Florida on December 25, 2003. He was 55.

In six years at VCU, Sims taught acting, directing, African-American theater history, dramatic history, and criticism. He made cultural diversity a priority, helping students start the Theatre of Diverse Voices at VCU. Nationally, Sims was president of two national organizations, the Black Theatre Network and the Association for



Theatre in Higher Education—simultaneously. He had served on the board of the Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival.

At a January 10, 2004, memorial service on campus, dozens of colleagues, friends, family and students from all over the country honored him with their anecdotes, prayers, and tributes of song, dance, art and performance.

Theatre Chair David Leong conjured Martin's spirit. "Great actors have it. Great teachers have it... Presence!" Leong said. "We feel his presence. A presence so strong that we expect him to walk through the door right now."

Many students and graduates spoke of him as more than a mentor—a father, "Dad." "How many students has Martin fed?" one alumna exclaimed. "He fed them chili, and he fed their spirits." Another added, "He never gave you easy answers. He taught you that when you fail, you fail—but that failure is how you learn." Leong was not the only one pinned by "the look"—Sims' pointing finger, accompanied by "that bright and wide, almost devilish smile and Sims' laughter....you always knew the subtext."

Everyone there had been warmed by Sims' embracing smile. Mikell Pinckney, the friend Sims was visiting when he died, described finding him Christmas afternoon. "On his face was the most radiant smile that said, 'I have seen Glory!'"

To contribute to the Marvin Sims Scholarship Fund to support diversity, write check to VCU Foundation, notation Marvin Sims Scholarship Fund; to VCU Foundation; PO Box 842026; Richmond, VA 23284-2026.

### Without Bias

Dr. Ted Jay Smith III died of a heart attack at 58 on January 4, 2004, after a battle with cancer. Smith had been on the faculty of the School of Mass Communications since 1987 and directed its graduate studies in 1990-92.

"Ted demanded a standard of excellence for VCU's journalism program that raised the bar for everyone," said Judy VanSlyke Turk, director of the School of Mass Communications. Even under pressure to compromise, she adds, "he never caved in." His student Elisabeth Bost '03BS/MC agrees. "Dr. Smith always inspired me to go the extra mile." Most important, she adds, "he taught me to undertake everything in life with my whole heart."

Smith's research areas were media analysis and criticism, public opinion and propaganda, and organizational communication. Smith was an often-quoted critic of liberal media bias and propaganda, political correctness, and network reporters, especially those from CNN. He was a senior research fellow at the Center for Media and Public Affairs, a board member of the National Association of Scholars and founding director of the Virginia Association of Scholars.

On campus, Smith was often at odds with the liberal majority; but his unwavering contention was that academia was out of step with mainstream America and in need of serious reform. Memorial contributions can be sent to Dr. Ted J. Smith III Memorial Fund; VCU School of Mass Communications; P. O. Box 842034; Richmond, VA 23284.







(Continued from page 26)

feels strongly that "building alumni bonds with the university depends on building human bonds. When alumni can connect to the people representing their university, that creates long-term relationships.

Attracting, inspiring and keeping good alumni staff is key. A mutually supportive staff and atmosphere of respect with every member willing and able to do any and all jobs assures alumni and students that their association is there to serve them and support the university."

VCU and its Alumni Associations have grown and matured rapidly, and both Associations are ready to be full partners with their university. The Associations have the programs to insure financial self reliance and to continue their heritage of substantial gifts to VCU. They are a significant presence on campus, and their open front doors welcome alumni, students and guests alike. Their award-winning magazines, exciting websites and email capability build trust and pride in VCU.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with the alumni, staff and students who brought the Associations to this level," Iles beams, "and I am proud of the potential and energy awaiting the new director."

*Mary Ellen Mercer has been editor of Shafer Court Connections since 1993 and was editor of Scarab 1992-00.*

## 1970s

**Mary Baird '79BS/E** on February 13, 2004, at 53. • **Marie (McCormick) Boucher '70BS/E** on January 13, 2004. A teacher for Richmond Public Schools, she received the Outstanding Teacher Award in elementary and secondary education in 1976. • **Ann (Mabe) Brown '71BSW '79MS/H&S** on February 20, 2004, at 55. She was a professor of anthropology at Mansfield University for 24 years. She was a member of the American Anthropological Association and the Society of American Archeology. • **Lois (Williams) Dowdy '70BS/E '76MEd** on January 27, 2004, at 78. She taught in Henrico County, VA Schools. • **Albert Fritter '72BS/E** on February 1, 2004, at 85. He was pastor of the Pleasant Valley United Methodist Church in Loudoun County, VA. He was assistant state director for Vocational Rehabilitation Services in 1977. He received the Counselor of the Year Award from the Virginia Department for the Visually Handicapped; the State of Virginia Elkins Award; and the Mid-Atlantic Region Elkins Award for his outstanding service. He retired from the Virginia Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped and the United Methodist Church in 1983. • **David Gipe Sr '72BS/E** on March 17, 2004. • **Frances (Gray) Gordon '70MEd** on December 19, 2003, at 81. She was a retired supervisor of Special Education for Richmond Public Schools. • **\*W. Floyd Johnson '67BS '72MS/B** on December 11, 2003, at 58. He was a retired director of leaf operations for Philip Morris. He was president of Monument Park Association and board member of the Royal Sea Fare Association. He was one of the original members of the Port of Richmond Commission, a former board member of the Richmond Salvation Army, past president of the Richmond Export/Import Club, and past chair of the Virginia Conference on World Trade. • **Vincent Jordan '74MSW** • **Stephen Judd '73BS/E** on February 12, 2004, at 52. He was a former teacher and policeman. • **Lonnie Lewis Jr. '79BS/B** on April 1, 2004. • **Mary (Brown) McCain '78MA/H&S** on February 4, 2004, at 62. She was a teacher and administrator in Richmond Public Schools until her retirement in 2001.

She was a member of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc., Richmond Delicados, Inc. and Treble Clef Book Club. • **Thelma (Seldes) Nieder '77MEd** on September 24, 2003, at 81. She taught first grade at Henry Clay Elementary School for 18 years. • **Luther Pace '70BS/B** on September 10, 2003. He worked for OHyperformance. • **Dan Pollock '74MS '78PhD/H&S** on December 25, 2003, at 60. He was a U.S. Army veteran, a former member of the Special Operations Response team, and a retired clinical psychologist. • **Stephen Richards '76BFA** on October 21, 2003, at 49. He was a bookseller at Fountain Bookstore in Richmond. • **Joseph Sheets '71AS/En** on February 2, 2004, at 54. He was vice president of the Atlee Group, Inc. For 30 years he was chief engineer of Alpha Recording Company and In Your Ear Music. • **Mary Snoddy '76MEd** on November 5, 2003, at 87. She was a retiree of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank. • **David Watson '74BFA** on November 3, 2003, at 55. He was a freelance graphic art designer.

## 1980s

**Maria Christian '82BS/MC** on March 13, 2004. • **Carol Greene '88BFA** on December 13, 2003, at 38, in an avalanche in the Cascade Mountains. She managed a Starbucks in Seattle and had recently climbed to the summits of Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Ranier. • **Ann (Morton) McCray '87BS/E** on December 19, 2003, at 39. • **Charles Fore '81BGS/H&S** on February 20, 2004, at 73. He was a retired sergeant major in the U.S. Army. • **Sandra Green '85C/B** on February 18, 2004, at 51, of cancer. • **Sonia Maurer '89BFA** on March 28, 2004, at 37 after a long struggle with cancer. • **Leonard Miller '81MEd** on March 20, 2004. • **James Neagle '81BA/H&S** on November 16, 2003. • **Stephen Rennolds '81BS/H&S** on September 7, 2003. • **Elizabeth Secrist '84BS/B** on March 23, 2004. She was the president of the local chapter of the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. • **\*Adice (Murphey) Waymack '83BGS/H&S** on October 16, 2003, at 80. She helped establish Reach for Recovery in Richmond.

### Key To Abbreviations

Alumni are identified by year degree/school

#### Schools

**A** Arts

**AH** Allied Health Professions

(CLS) Clinical Laboratory Sciences

(RC) Rehabilitation Counseling

**B** Business

**CPP** Center for Public Policy

**D** Dentistry

**E** Education

**En** Engineering

**H&S** Humanities and Sciences

**M-BH** Medicine-Basic Health Sciences

**MC** Mass Communications

**N** Nursing

**P** Pharmacy

**SW** Social Work

#### Degrees

**AS** Associate's Degree

**C** Certificate

**BGS** Bachelor of General Studies

**BIS** Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies

**BFA, MFA** Bachelor, Master of Fine Art

**BIS, MIS** Bachelor, Master of Interdisciplinary Studies

**BSW, MSW** Bachelor, Master of Social Work

**BM, MM, MME** Bachelor, Master of Music,

Master of Music Education

**M, DPA** Master, Doctor of Public Administration

**MAE** Master of Art Education

**MBA** Master of Business Administration

**MD** Doctor of Medicine

**MEd** Master of Education

**MIS** Master of Interdisciplinary Studies

**MPA, DPA** Master, Doctor of Public Administration

**MT** Five-year Teacher Education program includes a BA or BS/H&S and a Master of Teaching.

**MURP** Master of Urban and Regional Planning

**PhD** Doctor of Philosophy

*\*Member of the VCU Alumni Association*



## 1990s

**Barbara Blackwell '92BS/H&S** on October 6, 2003, at 34. • **Pearl Cox '97BFA** on January 6, 2004. • **William Fulton '92BS/B** on February 24, 2004. • **Nathaniel Scott Jr '91BS/H&S** on October 18, 2003.

## 2000s

\***Keith Gregory '79BM '01MSW** on November 21, 2003, at 47. • **Carroll O'Donnell '02C/B** on November 5, 2003, of cancer. She was communications coordinator for VCU Student Affairs & Enrollment Services and a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, the Association of Information Technology Professionals, the National Association of Webmasters, the HTML Writers Guild of the International Association of Computer Trainers, and the Maryland Council of Directors of Volunteer Services.

## FRIENDS OF VCU

**Lynn Abbott Jr.** on March 23, 2004. • **Donna (Brown) Banton** on February 20, 2004, at 64. She taught in Virginia Public schools for ten years. • **Laurie Hopper** on December 31, 2003, at 66. He was a retired employee of Seward Lumber Company in Claremont, VA. • **Ross Millhiser** on December 6, 2003, at 83. He was the vice-chair of Philip Morris Companies, and responsible for originating the now famous "Marlboro Man." • **Elizabeth (Golsan) Schneider** on January 16, 2004, at 89. She was a former trustee of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, on the Boards of the Richmond Symphony and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Fine Arts Committee for the State Department and a member of the Historic Richmond Foundation. • **Virginia (Brown) Smith** on April 3, 2004.

## Alumni Life Tips

Our homes and cars are usually our most expensive purchases and major assets. Most of us can't afford to have those assets underinsured if a catastrophic loss occurs. The check list below will help you review your coverage to make sure your home and vehicles, and thus, your family, are properly protected.

1. Review the declaration pages to be sure all information is accurate. Do not rely on verbal confirmations. Make sure your zip code and the year of construction on your home are correct. This data directly affects your premium and replacement value of your home.
2. Educate yourself about the different discounts that insurance companies offer. For home insurance, there may be discounts for an alarm system, a newer home, and proximity to a fire station. For auto insurance, discounts may apply for a good student, college education, mature driver, and safety features of your vehicle. For both auto and homeowners insurance, your residence history and length of employment could make a difference in your rate. You may also want to check with your employer, alumni or professional association to see whether they offer an affinity program with an additional discount.
3. Be honest with your agent about the use of your vehicle. If you regularly use your personal auto for business, your insurance probably needs to be classified for the business purpose. While this may mean a slightly higher premium, it protects you from having a claim denied later because your insurance was improperly classified as only personal.
4. Don't base your decision only on price. Make sure that the insurance company delivers the level of service you expect. Ask the company about their claims handling process, and if there are local representatives for you to contact should you want another option than a centralized 800-number.
5. Take into account where you live and drive. For example, if you live in a rural area, the chance of being in a multi-car crash on the highway is much less likely than in an urban or suburban area. This would affect the amount of bodily injury or property damage coverage you need.
6. Look into any other special benefits the insurance company offers (free roadside assistance, discounts with other retailers for the maintenance of your vehicle or home, safety courses for young drivers, educational seminars, etc.).

A periodic review of your auto and home insurance coverage may take a little time; but these expensive investments deserve the right protection.

Since 2001, Liberty Mutual has been providing alumni of VCU and its Medical College of Virginia Campus with the Group Savings Plus® (GSP) program. Through Liberty Mutual's GSP, alumni are eligible for additional discounts on automobile and homeowners insurance. For more information call 1-800-524-9400 or visit <http://www.libertymutual.com/lm/vcucaa> for Academic Campus alumni or <http://www.libertymutual.com/lm/vcumcaa> for MCV Campus alumni.



At the African American Alumni Council's 15th Reunion, glad greetings flew all weekend—from Friday's reception hosted by AAAC President **Nina Sims '93BS/MC** and a "Back in the Day" party with band E.U., through the traditional great picnic and Saturday dance. Alumni took time for thought at a seminar led by VCU associate vice provost for diversity, **Dr. Micah McCreary**, and his wife **Jacqueline**; and at the farewell breakfast with a talk from **Reverend Walter Smith Jr. '80BS/H&S**.





# VCU Grows East

In November, President Eugene Trani unveiled plans for the **Monroe Campus** (in downtown Richmond's Monroe Ward), a 10.8-acre addition to VCU's Academic Campus. The \$218.5 million project includes Phases 2 and 3 of the Engineering School, a new School of Business, a conference center, and residence halls.

VCU's nationally recognized AdCenter has an eye on the area's 1897 Central Belting Building—"the kind of left-brain, over-the-top space that they prefer," President Trani observes. The new engineering and business buildings to open in 2007 and 2008 are near each other. Cross-pollination will develop tech-wise MBAs and market-smart engineers.

Trani calls the project a "self-help initiative," because the state would supply only \$30 million (14 percent) of the total cost. (See "Campaign for VCU," inside front cover, and **VCU Budget Increases**, p. 5.) Trani argues that the Monroe Campus—like VCU expansion on Broad Street—will transform the University and revive a vastly underused section of the city. The entire project will take 15 to 17 years.

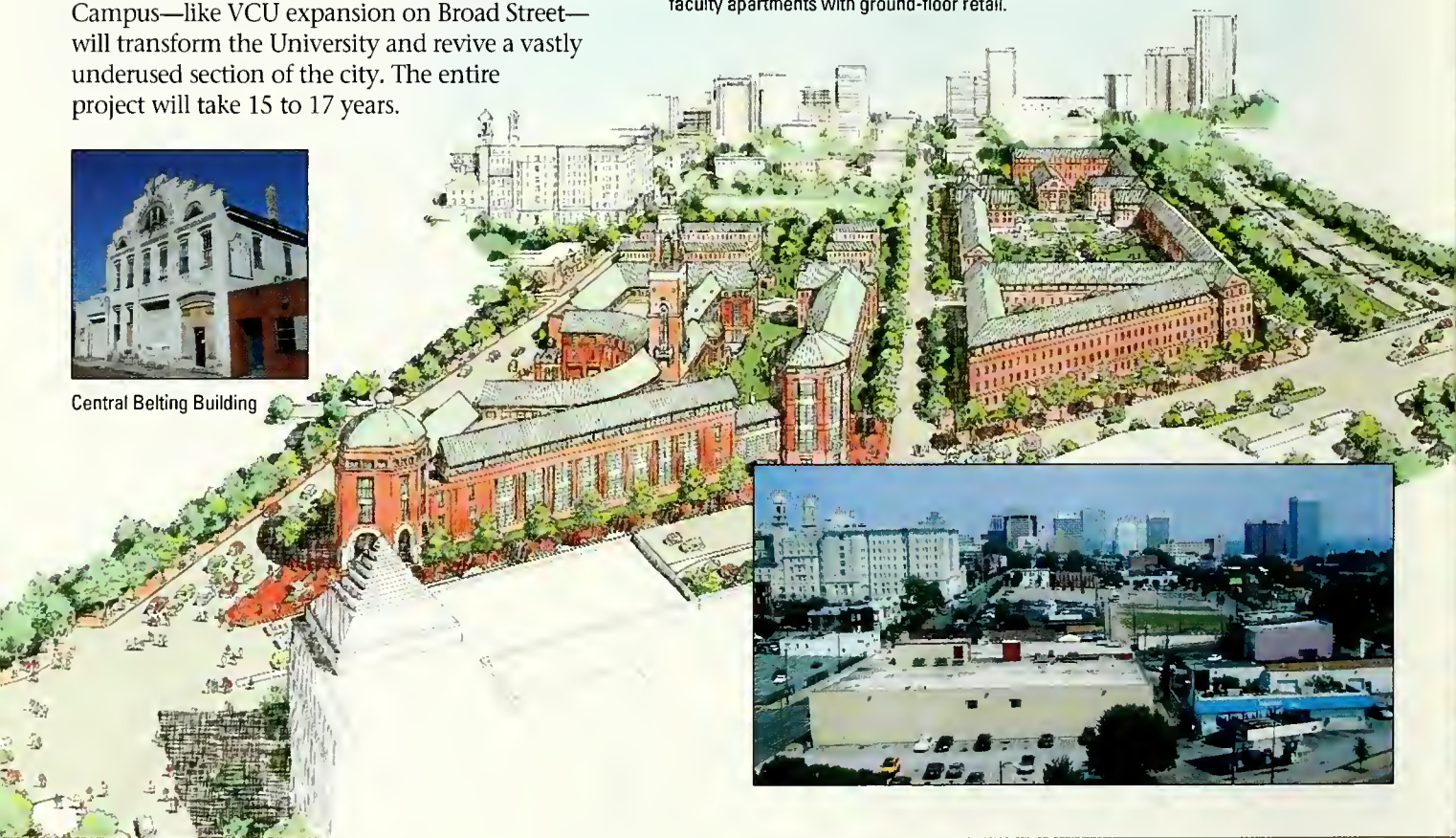


Central Belting Building



**Main Street Elevation:** the Business (left, east) and Engineering Schools at opposite ends of the block connect in a common area at the center of the curving arms with colonnades.

**Oversite:** Lower left, familiar Engineering pyramid at Main Street and Belvidere; across Belvidere, new Engineering Building on Belvidere from Main to Cary Streets and east; new Business Building on Main Street from tower east; south side of Cary (to right), student residences with parking for 800 cars underneath. Heading downtown, in the next block, a conference center on Cary; farther east is Central Belting Building; and behind that a new Anderson Gallery. North and west again, on Cary, proposed faculty apartments with ground-floor retail.



# VCU

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